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THE  
SILENCE OF SCRIPTURE.

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE following pages include the substance of a series of sermons delivered in the usual parochial service at Brookline. My object, for the purposes of the pulpit, was to notice the practical inferences to be drawn from the Silence of Scripture, in some of those instances in which this Silence is most marked. Although Dr. WORDSWORTH speaks the common opinion of most commentators when he tells us that the Silence of God's Word is itself inspired, yet the subject is one which has been comparatively unexplored.<sup>1</sup> In the course of my investigations of the extent and teachings of this Silence, particularly in the New Testament records, the materials in my hands so expanded as to adapt them to the press rather than the pulpit. I have concluded,

<sup>1</sup> The only instances in which the subject, so far as my reading informs me, is distinctively considered, are to be found in the sections on the "Omissions in Scripture," contained in Archbishop WHATELY'S *Essays*, and in his *Cautions for the Times*; in Canon MILLER'S Lecture on the *Silence of Scriptures*, delivered before the London Young Men's Christian Association, in 1858; and in the Rev. ROBERT HALL'S remarkable sermon *On the Glory of God in Concealing*.

therefore, to place them in the present channel ; and I earnestly pray that this, the consideration of the Silences of the Divine Text, may make, to all in whose hands these pages fall, those utterances which are revealed not only more distinct, but more precious, as containing God's sole and exclusive message to man.

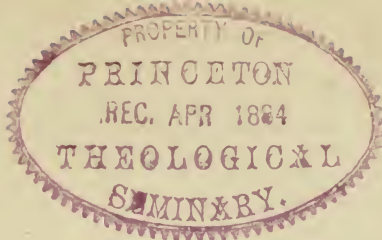
F. W.

BROOKLINE, *February* 25, 1867.



Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, by patience and comfort of Thy Holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast giben us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.





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# THE SILENCE OF SCRIPTURE.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

**I**N a divine revelation, we must expect many points of information to be reserved. You send a child, for instance, on an errand to a distant street ; and you give him the street's name, and the number of the crossings, and repeat to him perhaps more than once his particular business ; but you do not detain and perplex him by either a history or a panoramic exposition of the city he visits. "When I was a child, I spake as a child ;" and the converse is also true : "When I was a child, I was spoken to as a child : such knowledge was given to me as was proper for my childhood's estate." And even in our manhood, and in reference to our fellow-men, there are always topics as to which we are more or less ignorant, and as to which speculative information is withheld. Thus a government sends forth a colonist ; but gives him just information enough to enable him to perform his particular work. A general charges an inferior officer with a special duty, but here, too, there is silence as to whatever does not belong to this duty. To en-

large the official directions given in either case so as to include all the knowledge the superior may possess, would perplex the agent, and withdraw his attention from that which concerned his work to that which did not concern it. And if we are to expect such silence in a parent's dealings with a child, and in a government's dealings with a subaltern, how much more reason have we to expect it in the dealings of God with man. God knows all things and endures from eternity to eternity : man comes into the world knowing nothing ; lives at the best a life which endures for a few years ; and in this short life is charged with the momentous question of settling his own destiny for the eternity to come. Silence, then, on all irrelevant questions is what we would expect in the revelation of an all-wise God ; and of the irrelevancy, He is the sole judge.

Hence it is, for the purpose both of pointing out this irrelevancy and of concentrating our attention on those topics which revelation presents to us, God's *silence* in the inspired record has been considered by devout minds as only inferior in importance to His express utterance. "There is such fulness in that book," says Boyle, "that not only its expression but its silences are teaching, like a dial in which the shadow as well as the light informs us." So Archbishop Trench speaks of the Bible's silence as being more expressive than other books' speech ;<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Wordsworth, of the silence of revelation as in itself inspired ;<sup>2</sup> and Dr. Arnold, of inspiration, being marked by what it does not say as well as by what it does.<sup>3</sup> In expansion of this thought, I

<sup>1</sup> *Hulsean Lectures*, 1845. — Lect. VI. (Am. ed. p. 86.)

<sup>2</sup> *Occasional Sermons*, XII. p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> *Sermon on the Interpretation of Scripture*, p. 9, &c.

propose to take up for exposition and application, some of the points in which this silence may be observed.

First, then, comes the question of the creation of the world. A passion for antiquarianism is common enough ; and men have not been few who have spent their lives in the deciphering of inscriptions and the collection of relics. The fascination of historical study, if not so absorbing, is more widely spread ; and in proportion as the dignity of a character rises, our curiosity is sharpened to possess ourselves of the pettiest details of his life. How natural, then, the eagerness with which we would turn to the creation of the world ! If the revelation is one which is complete, how much to interest, to fascinate, and absorb ! I say nothing of the vast periods of time needed to possess even the keenest minds with but a portion of the details of such a stupendous work ; but I would notice the profound depths to which the observer would be thus led, and the awful mysteries on which he would gaze face to face. How laudable the desire, we might then at the first glance say, to be possessed of a revelation giving such a history at large !

Yet what is really given us is only this : “ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void ; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.” And then follows in greater detail a narrative of the creative work, grouping it in six distinct days or eras, closing as follows : “ And God saw every thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good.” The whole history is comprised in a chapter occupying not more than a single ordinary page.

“But is this all?” — so the speculative inquirer may be supposed to ask. “In fact you tell me little more than that there is a God, and that heaven and earth are made by Him. Each word of your narrative opens a new depth infinitely profound; and my speculative ignorance is increased, not diminished, by what you tell. What, for instance, were the counsels of God, when this mighty work was achieved. What were his agents? Was it by the slower processes of chemical and mechanical action that He worked, or by the application of intelligent force? Was God in solitude before this? Did He live in space without matter? And if so, how, as a spirit, can matter be acted on by Him?”

“And then, again, as to the word ‘BEGINNING.’ When was this? What existed before it? Between this *beginning* and the events your history narrates, how much time elapsed? Was it a myriad of years, during which the earth seethed with multitudinous changes; or was it but a moment? And so as to the term *day* that follows. ‘One day with the Lord is as a thousand years;’ so the same book afterwards tells us; and in the Hebrew tongue this word *day*, besides its ordinary signification of twenty-four hours, implies any distinct epoch, determinate or indeterminate. Which do you mean here?”

“And so as to the word *heavens*. What does this mean? Are these heavens infinite? Are they composed of planets inhabited like our own? On this point your revelation is silent: it utters no speech.”

But “God,” says the patriarch, “discovereth deep things out of darkness,” and it is for us reverentially to inquire what are the lessons which the silence of Scripture on this point imparts. And I think they may be summed up as follows: —

And first, a detailed scientific exposition of the earth's history would have been a great impediment in the way of a reception of revelation. Men are impatient of whatever contradicts their senses ; and are by no means disposed to welcome any system in which such contradictions are contained. A French traveler tells us of an Indian tribe to whom one of their own number sought to explain the wonders he had seen on a late visit to the great cities of the white men. He romanced a good deal on the subject of magic, to which he ascribed much that he had seen ; and this they very readily accepted as truth. After a while, however, he described a balloon, as a canoe that sailed on the clouds ; but this they at once rejected, declaring that so great an impostor as was the narrator of such a story did not deserve to live. And such has been very much the history of society in reference to any great discoveries which contradicted the superficial view the senses gave. Men would believe in witches and ghosts ; but they would not tolerate the truths that Albertus Magnus, and Roger Bacon, and Galileo, proclaimed. "The story is absurd : it tells us that the earth moves round the sun : it tells us, therefore, what we know is untrue, and it thus assails doctrines which lie at the foundation of the public faith ; its propagators must be put down." So were the first proclaimers of the true theory of the heavens treated ; and if the Mosaic narrative had broken its silence to give a correct exposition of astronomy, it is difficult to understand, supposing the present providential arrangement of gradual scientific development to have obtained, how that narrative could have commended itself to the popular faith. As it is, with all the powerful external and internal evidence by which the Bible has been

vouched, men have been reluctant to receive it ; and the slightest supposed discrepancies have been seized on as pretexts for its rejection. But how would it have been if its whole terminology, if not its dogmatic utterances, were in the teeth of what men thought they saw with the bodily eye. A premature revelation of science would not be likely to be accepted as a revelation of religious truth.

Nor, secondly, would the consequences be less perilous if men should at once accept such a revelation of science. For, observe, that if an objection holds good to the reservation of truth on one point, it holds good to a reservation of truth on all others ; and hence, a Bible, to be accepted as inspired, must contain an absolute, complete, perfect exhibition of universal knowledge, squaring, not with what we know now, but with what we would know if our powers were infinitely extended, and our perceptions infinitely acute. Now how incompatible this would be with that gradual progress of the race in scientific attainment which Providence has been pleased to ordain ! The question that thus arises, is, therefore, not between the Bible and science, but between the progressive development of scientific truth, which now exists, and a system in which all truth is presented at the outset, in full detail, to the eye. I do not presume to contrast these systems ; for the first is that which nature as well as revelation traces directly to God ; but I do say, that there are one or two obvious reasons why we must consider the course thus established by Providence as that which is most conducive to our interests as creatures under probation for a higher and a better world. “If God should open the question,” so substantially spoke Leibnitz, one of the most devout as



well as profound of philosophers, "and should be pleased to offer me on the one side absolute scientific truth, and on the other, the search after such truth, in all humility I would say, let it be the search after truth, as that which belongeth to Thy creature, O Lord." For who could see God face to face and live? Who without struggling can ascend the heavenly heights? Can knowledge ever be obtained without long endeavor; and is complete knowledge compatible with this our creature life and probationary condition, and limited days? And even supposing such a complete and universal revelation to be obtained, how would the stimulus to patient experiment, to laborious study, to eager intellectual effort, at once depart! If the delights and the invigorations of *seeking* belong even to celestial spheres, how eminently do they belong to our own! How emphatically, then, is this very *silence* of God, the voice that calls forth the laborer to his work, and cheers student and philosopher on as each seeks to enter some new circle of action or thought? And how does this silence whisper to us one truth more, and that the profoundest of all — our own littleness before God! The highest reach of science is to show us our own ignorance; our greatest strength serves best to illustrate our helplessness in the Divine hand. So learn we to adore, to revere, to obey.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The mysteries of Nature with regard to the *essences* of things, and, indeed, to a great multitude of subtle *operations*, are kept in a kind of sacred reserve and elude the utmost efforts of philosophy to surprise them and bring them to light. While Science goes on from step to step in the march of her discoveries, it seems as if her grandest result was her conviction how much remains undiscovered; and while nations in a ruder state of science have been ready to repose on their ignorance and error, the most enlightened of men have always been the first to receive and

And then, thirdly, such a revelation would but imperfectly reach those wants to which a revelation is peculiarly addressed. "To the poor the gospel is preached;" such was the crowning proof given by our blessed Lord that His was truly the revelation of God. You may take either the extreme of ignorance, or the extreme of cultivation, and you will find that this poverty of spirit is a necessity to those who would approach their God. Here, for instance, is a negro slave, in the old days of slavery, listening to the preacher's voice, or spelling out, it may be, in his Bible, the divine message it contains. What form of communication could better meet his wants than that which marks the sacred text? There he finds history and biography; all involving events and characters he can conceive, and couched in language which sounds like hearth-talk to his untutored ear. And then there is the mystical teaching of redemption, which at once meets with a verification in the voices of his own soul, —

"I the chief of sinners am,  
But Jesus died for me."

So he cries, from the depth of his heart; but does the most profound philosopher speak otherwise, when he awakens to the truth of spiritual life? A Bible that would be a scientific text-book would be no Bible for the poor in spirit, whether they take rank among the multitudes who are ignorant of this world's knowledge, acknowledge the remaining obscurity which hung around them, just as in the night, the farther a light extends the wider the surrounding sphere of darkness appears." — Robert Hall, *Sermon on the Glory of God*, &c.

"Qui nescit ignorare, ignorat scire." So quotes Sir W. Hamilton, who thus paraphrases the proverb: "The highest reach of human science is the scientific recognition of human ignorance."



or the few who are versed in it. From all such the appeal is : "I seek other things ; I rise higher ; I must learn those truths which concern my Saviour and my soul."

And then, lastly, revelation, by its silence on these questions of natural science, shows that it is to the soul's condition and destiny alone that God points us, as the supreme object of thought. Let us suppose that when the entrance into a mine has been choked, a miner, of superior intelligence, pours the light of a dark lantern solely upon the spot where he sees a path of escape can be hewn out. "That is the point ; scatter not your strength : work *there*." Somewhat of this character, though of an infinitely higher degree, is the light poured by revelation on the way of life. "It is not elsewhere that your soul is to be turned ; revelation condescends to this one theme ; thither all its rays converge ; on this topic all its light is poured ; how fallen man can be raised and saved." There is an awful prominence given, therefore, to this topic, by the silence of God. All else is shrouded in darkness ; here alone is light given to the soul. Study this book : it contains all that is necessary to your spiritual life. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." It is a light which not merely points out the path of life, but distinguishes that path from the darkness in which God is not to be found.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

IF a religion should be constructed by men, for human effect, one of the points on which it would be most likely to seek to satisfy curiosity would be the origin of sin. To no topic have men's eyes been so eagerly turned. To the natural mind, none is so insoluble. Supposing no revelation to exist, in what mazes of contradiction do we find ourselves here involved. I cannot look into my own heart ; I cannot look at the conduct of others ; I cannot look at the history of the world, without this cry : " Here is sin ; whence came it ? " And I turn to the Bible for a solution, and find only this : " God created man in His own image, and blessed him, and gave him dominion over the earth in which he was placed. But there were limits within which man's liberty was restrained, and the physical penalty of breaking these limits was future death. But there was a still greater penalty, and that was the curse of SIN. And man broke these limits, and disobeyed the Divine command, and received the penalties, — physical death and sinfulness of soul. To this he was tempted by an evil being, who, as a serpent, visited the garden where man dwelt." Such is the substance of the narrative of the fall of man, and beyond this, revelation speaks not.

" But you do not reach the mystery into which we so

much desire to penetrate ;” so we may hear the objector say. “ You tell us something about one of evil’s *conquests*, but nothing about its *cause*. Whence came it? We have had speculations enough on this point from inquirers, but nothing that carries with it any proof. One supposes that evil is coexistent with good. Another supposes that evil must always exist where there is unshackled liberty of choice. Another intimates that evil is the result of God’s decree. Certainly two things we must postulate : one is that evil actually exists ; the other that God is all-holy, all-wise, and all-good. How can these be reconciled? What clew does your revelation afford? ”

“ Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” God, for our own benefit and His glory,—to discipline us, to vindicate His own majesty,—is pleased, over this mystery of the origin of evil, to drop an impenetrable veil. “ Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.” And where He is pleased thus to dwell in silence, there He places the cherubim with the flaming sword.

*Nature* cannot penetrate where His secrets thus lie hid. Nature takes you to an endless series of cause above cause, or effect after effect, but neither above nor below is God to be found. Her ladder rests below on earth, but does not extend upwards to those heavenly tents where dwells the great First Cause. She says this effect was produced by this cause, and this cause was produced by another cause ; and so from cause to cause, until she turns faintingly back, and declares, “ Here is the veil ; further I cannot penetrate ; the se-

cret things belong to the Lord our God." And so, also, is she speechless when she seeks to trace the cause of the evil by which the world is racked and stained.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me:  
I bring to life, I bring to death;  
The spirit does but mean the breath, —  
I know no more."

We may kneel, it is true,

"Upon the great world's altar-stairs  
That slope *through* darkness up to God," —

But out of the darkness Nature has no power to lead.

If the Bible were closed ; if the only Divine book open to us were the book of Nature, with what still greater awfulness and emphasis would this same silence speak. "God has reserved this question ; He does not choose that its mystery should be penetrated by the children of men. Evil stands as much truncated in nature as it does in the inspired text : here is the base — here is sin — but the head, the original devising source, is removed from your view. Every act of folly or crime reproduces the sin in the garden ; every deed of blood, the violence of Cain. There is the fall, and the heart bears witness to the tempter." This Nature shows us, but she shows us no more. This the revealed text shows us, but it shows us no more. If there is an edict in natural religion that is distinct and unmistakable, it is this, "This subject is sealed." If there be an attitude in which Nature most vividly exhibits God, it is in affixing these solemn seals. "He is a God of secrets," — so she whispers to us, — "He is a God that concealeth ;" "no searching can find Him out ;" "stand back, and know that He is God." "Verily, Thou art a

God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour." God of Israel, exhibiting Thyself in the history of Thy ancient people ; God the Saviour, exhibiting Thyself in Thy incarnation for the salvation of humanity ; but in Thy essence, and in respect to Thine own mysteries, hiding Thyself from the vision of men. Nature thus tells us that the entrance to these mysteries is sealed ; and Revelation but repeats what Nature proclaims. To object to this reserve is to object to the system which pervades not merely the Bible but the world.

And yet, as this reserve is God's own utterance both in act and in book, like all His other utterances, it has meanings on which it well becomes us to ponder. Of these meanings I shall for a few moments dwell on two.

I. First, then, observe the narrowness of the limits in which our powers of religious investigation are confined. There have been cases in which the secrets of great mechanical discoveries have been so scrupulously preserved, that for a while the most curious eye was baffled in its attempts to penetrate the chambers where the process of manufacture was carried on. High walls concealed the inclosure ; sworn sentinels stood guard at its gates ; and yet, even with such checks, these walls might be scaled, or these sentinels corrupted ; or at last a chance guess would discover the key to the secret which mere care sought so jealously to preserve. But it is otherwise with this great mystery of evil, and its relations to the All-Holy God. Around this, the council chamber, as it were, of divinity, a wall is built which no human vision can pierce. We are thus shut out from any accurate speculative theology ; for the door is closed to that region without a knowledge of which no accurate speculative theology can be

framed. What we are concerned with is the faith of the heart and the obedience of the life ; it is not speculation on the unrevealed, but submission to the revealed. Though "we may know," says Bishop Butler, "somewhat concerning the designs of Providence in the government of the world, enough to enforce upon us religion and the practice of virtue ; yet, since the monarchy of the universe is a dominion unlimited in extent and everlasting in duration, the general system of it must necessarily be quite beyond our comprehension. And since there appears such a subordination and reference of the several parts to each other, as to constitute it properly one administration or government, we cannot have a thorough knowledge of any part, without knowledge of the whole." "Knowledge," proceeds this great thinker, "is not our proper happiness. It is evident that there is another mark set up for us to aim at ; another end which the most knowing may fail of, and the most ignorant arrive at :— '*The secret things belong unto the Lord our God : but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*' Which reflection of Moses, put in general terms, is, that the only knowledge which is of any avail to us, is that which teaches us our duty, or assists us in the discharge of it." Reason is given us to judge of the evidences of religion, which are addressed to men ; and to apply the precepts of religion, which concern practical life ; and not to penetrate the mysteries of religion, which belong to God.

II. Such being the lesson we learn from God's silence as to the origin of evil, let us conclude by inquiring how what has been revealed as to this mystery



bears on our practical life. What we thus receive may be summed up under the following heads.

1st. We are assailed not only by an inner tendency to evil, inherent in our corrupt wills, but by a powerful spiritual adversary, who seeks the ruin of our souls. He is the chief of the fallen angels, cast down from heaven for his pride and revolt against the Most High, and now he ranges the earth, with his subordinates, tempting men to sin. So he tempted our first parents ; so he tempted David, Judas, and Ananias ; and so, with awful skill and power, he tempts us all.

2d. And yet, in the second place, powerful and insidious as Satan thus is, he is under restraint, and cannot destroy us if we resist him in the proffered strength of the Lord. "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." And if we *fall*, it is because we yield. There is an allegory, traceable, I believe, to Luther, which portrays to us a missionary meeting at which the Prince of Wickedness himself presided, to hear the reports of his emissaries, returning from their errands of evil about the earth. "I dogged a caravan of Christians crossing the desert," cried one, "and I hounded the wild beasts on them, and they were torn to pieces, and their bones lie whitening on the sand." "But what of this," answered Satan ; "for their souls were all saved." "And I just now spied on the waves a boat full of Christians," reported another, "and I flung a storm down on them, and they foundered, and there lie *their* bodies fresh under the sea." "But what of *that*," cried Satan ; "for their souls were saved." "And I," said a third, the subtlest of them all, "was twenty years tempting a righteous

man to commit a sin, and I succeeded, and he consented, and I left him asleep in his sin." "Then Satan," so follows the allegory, "cried, 'Well done!' and the night stars of hell shouted for joy." But it is only over the consenting Christian that the tempter prevails. "Satan hath desired to have thee, but *I* have prayed for thee that *thy* faith fail not." Christ's intercession, the believer's faith, — these form a sure armor against attack from our soul's foe. We must trust; we must work in Christ's vineyard, and in our own particular secular labor, and through His mighty intercession we are safe. And if so, temptation builds us up rather than destroys. It is like the torrent that pours down an embankment of sand around the piers of a bridge firmly planted in the river bed. It may rage, but it only adds strength to that which it assails. Temptation may thus become, as St. Augustine tells, the ladder by which heaven itself is reached. Meeting and surmounting each temptation as it in turn is presented, first the coarse, and then the more refined, the soul at last reaches the heavenly heights. And thus it is, on the one hand, that there is no temptation so great as not to be tempted at all, no danger so great as unconsciousness of danger; so on the other hand, consciousness of temptation is the soul's safeguard, and conquest of temptation the soul's ennoblement.

3d. And then the last truth is, that there is a final day coming when temptation will cease, and when Satan and his angels will be imprisoned finally and forever. "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," says the Lord, speaking prophetically of this great day. "Then shall that Wicked be revealed," writes St. Paul, speaking of the final great struggle, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall



destroy with the brightness of His coming.”<sup>1</sup> And hear of the glory of the regenerated world, under this the dominion of the Lord Christ: “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. . . . And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” There enters neither sin, nor suffering, nor death; and there the redeemed and glorified soul will grow forever in the blessed knowledge and service of the Lord, unpolluted by sin, and unassailed by temptation. What, then, is revealed to us of the power of sin, teaches us to watch, to work, to trust, to hope, and to conquer. The foe that contends with us is great, but greater is Christ our King, and in these things we shall be more than conquerors, through Him who redeemed us, and died for us on the tree.

“For though my sinfulness is great,  
Atoning grace is greater;  
And though all Hell should lie in wait,  
Supreme is my Creator;  
And He my Strength and Fortress is,  
And when most helpless, most I 'm His,  
My Strength and my Redeemer!”

“Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.” Thou hidest whatever it is not needful for us to know; Thou revealest whatever is required to lead us into the path of life.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 8.

## CHAPTER III.

### DIVINATION.

**I**N a man-made religion, Divination is a chief feature. It may be Divination by means of certain prescribed mechanisms ; or it may be Divination through a particular priesthood ; but from such a system, Divination of some sort seems inseparable. It may be that, under the grossest form of superstition, witches mutter their incantations over the ashes, or sing out their prophecies in wild orgies round the caldron in which the mystic decoction seethes. Or it may be that from marble statue, or from consecrated grove, proceed the prophetic utterances, charming the refined by their classic elegance, and overawing the superstitious by their mystic terrors. And before these oracles men of all classes have knelt. It is not merely the peasant, stretching out his hand in dull credulity for the gypsy's edict ; for men of all stages of enlightenment have besought the soothsayer to open to them the secrets of their future. It may be that the imposture was so transparent that in any other subject-matter it would have been scornfully disdained. Be this as it may, the vortex of Divination is approached by rapids, which, when once they are entered, it seems impossible to escape. What, for instance, is more shallow than Spiritualism ? What has been more ignominiously exposed ? And yet

strong men are sometimes swept into its depths by the very force of this yearning to penetrate the secrets of the Invisible World. "Have you not lost a beloved friend?" — so is one bleeding under a recent bereavement addressed. "Would you not hear from that friend?" And the grieving and yearning heart is thus drawn into a current from which few return with minds perfectly uncrazed. Or, with some momentous future ahead, and some question of great doubt besetting the present, the same yearning to penetrate the veil becomes equally irresistible even to men of the serenest and most intellectual mould. Marcus Aurelius, the most philosophic of emperors, sought consolation from an oracle of some of whose deceptions he was necessarily aware. Wallenstein, one of the most statesmanlike of generals, took as his guide an astrologer whom he could not but despise; and on the eve of Pultowa made the question as to who was the truest of his friends depend upon the verdict of an omen.<sup>1</sup> Lord Herbert of Cherbury, one of the keenest of skeptics, hung his religious creed on the unexpected occurrence of a meteoric shower. The pretended ability to predict the unforeseen and determine the future, has enabled the most presumptuous of impostors to number among their votaries the intelligent as well as the ignorant; the sage as well as the child. And if a religion was devised by man for the purpose of winning human support, such a claim would almost surely be advanced. It was so with the mythologies of old times; it is so with the fraudulent superstitions of our own.

And yet, immense as is the power which such a pre-

<sup>1</sup> "Gib mir ein Zeichen, Schicksal! Der soll's seyn  
Der an dem nächsten Morgen mir zuerst  
Entgegen kommt mit einem Liebeszeichen."

Wallenstein's *Tod*, II. 3.

tension gives, it is one which Christianity, solitary in this respect among all religions appealing to Divine sanction, most expressly disclaims. It avails itself of no such curiosity ; it appeals to no such superstitious yearnings, tremendous as is the power to be thus invoked. It gives no mechanism by which the future may be forecast. It appoints no oracular priesthood. And not only this, but it pronounces the future destinies of the individual to be impenetrable to the human eye. "I returned, and saw that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill ; but time and chance happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time." "We know not what shall be on the morrow." And again : "There shall be two in the field : the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." "Go to, now," so speaks St. James, "ye who say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year ; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow." Strange utterances these, at a period when every religion had its oracles ; and when, as if on the eve of some great convulsion, voices of Divination, mixed with the cries of demoniac possession, seemed to issue from the whole surface of the moral world.<sup>1</sup> And stranger still the silence which Christianity, when all other religious systems provided oracle and shrine, preserved on this whole question of the in-

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Trench, in his *Treatise on Miracles*, (p. 162,) says : — "If there was any thing that marked the period of the Lord's coming in the flesh, it was the wreck and confusion of man's spiritual life. The whole period was the hour and power of darkness ; of a darkness which then, immediately before the dawn of a new day, was the thickest."

dividual future, standing with finger on the lip, as if to say, "As to this I have no voice, neither shalt thou." In view of the prevalence of Divination in those days ; in view of the immense power it exercised over the sensibilities and fears of men ; in view of the fact that in the popular mind, oracle and shrine were indispensable to religious faith,<sup>1</sup> — the silence of the Apostles on this point, — their stern dissociation of themselves and their

<sup>1</sup> Juvenal, in his sixth satire, speaks at large of divination as an essential feature of all religious rites. After specifying several cases, the following summary is given: —

" The curse is universal : high and low  
Are mad alike the future hour to know.  
The rich consult a Babylonian seer,  
Skilled in the mysteries of either sphere ;  
Or a gray-headed priest, hired by the state,  
To watch the lightning, and to expiate.  
The middle sort, a quack, at whose command  
They lift the forehead, and make bare the hand.  
The poor apply to humbler cheats, still found  
Beside the circus wall, or city mound ;  
While she, whose neck no golden trinket bears,  
To the dry ditch, or dolphin's tower, repairs,  
And anxiously inquires which she shall choose,  
The tapster, or old clothes-man ? Which refuse ? "

Gifford's *Translation*, lines 836-50.

The reference to Judaism is much weakened by Mr. Gifford. I give the original: —

" Cum dedit ille locum, cophino fenoque relicto  
Arcanam Judæa tremens mendicat in aurem,  
Interpres legum Solymarum et magna sacerdos  
Arboris ac summi fida internuntia cœli — "

It will be seen by this that the claim to divination was prominently put forth by the Jews at Rome.

No impostor would have neglected so powerful an element of fascination ; but by the Apostles it was not only disclaimed but denounced. In St. Paul's case, one of the most violent persecutions he encountered was from his having silenced an oracle of Divination out of which the owners obtained "much gain." — Acts xvi. 16.

work from any such power, is accountable in no other way than by the direction of the Most High. The utterances which *human* wisdom could not have averted, must have been silenced by *Divine*.

But it is with the lessons of this, the silencing of Divination, that we have to do ; and the first is, that we find in Christianity alone a true revelation of the real relations of man to God, so far as the disposal of the future is concerned. In *His* hand are contained results, leaving duties alone to us. The oars of Providence are muffled. We know not our hour ; and hence we are to labor as if we were to live forever, and trust as if we were to die to-night. Our eyes are blinded to the future wherever we have freedom of action ; they are open to the future only when that freedom of action is refused. We can foresee an eclipse a thousand years hence, but we cannot avert it ; we could avert a conflagration by which our own home may be burned to-night, but we cannot foresee it. On the one side, consciousness of mighty powers of perception in things not concerning self ; on the other side, the necessity of trust, faith, and resignation in all that concerns self ;—these are the spiritual truths we here learn.

Nor is the subject without moral lessons of almost equal moment. There could be no courage in the endurance of difficulties ; no energy in surmounting them ; no wise care of emergencies ; none of that sagacious industry which provides against each of the several chances of loss ; none of that heroism which derives its dignity and manliness from its battle against opposition which is often as unexpected as it is defiant. The highest type of moral greatness, in fact, is built up and developed by the very endurance and comprehensive-



ness which this struggle against the unforeseen imparts. It has been said that Washington and William of Orange became great generals by defeats ; to these they owed the majesty which disappointment could not shock ; the training of mind and nerve which neglected nothing, and presumed on nothing ; the habit of associating the triumph of right with the far future, and not with the present's verdict ; and the largeness of intellect which could plan for success comprehensively, and when success at last came, receive it with tranquil and unelated brow. And so it is with us in the battles of life. Whatever greatness may belong to our moral powers will be largely traceable to the difficulties which this, the future's darkness, heaps in our path.

But it is mainly with our affections that this question concerns itself ; and living as we do in this world of wrongs and griefs, it is hard to see how our affections could grow, were not the future mercifully hid. Observe how it would be with our wrongs. It would be a weary and unbounteous world in which men should always foresee the alienations and ingritudes of the days to come ! It would be a world in which there would be little of that unselfish trust ; that hoping against hope ; that readiness to try once more and forgive ; that long patience with the erring, which are among the most beautiful features in this our fallen state. All would be either horror at the certain crime, or selfish partnership in the assured success.

And so with the griefs of life. I do not know how we could bear these if we saw them ahead. Most men who have reached mature years have known what it is to meet with some stunning blow on the hearth and heart ; what would it have been if this blow had been

foreseen? It may have been in some matter of business economy, when, without any moral wrong, the whole fabric of prosperity may be suddenly swept away. It may be such a case as that of the late Mr. Wilder, whose history has recently been so effectively told ; and in which almost a lifetime of honorable business success, and of noble hospitality, and of large beneficence, was suddenly, and sharply, and finally terminated by a bankruptcy as undeserved as it was irremediable. But how would that noble hospitality have become a grief and a shame, and that liberal hand have been paralyzed, had the ruin of final years been foreseen? Macbeth, as soon as the event on which depended his predicted overthrow ceased to be improbable, — when the woods approached the castle, and he not born of woman appeared, — cried out in despair that his resolution was palled, and his manhood gone. And so others less guilty than Macbeth would speak, if the disasters of the future were to each of us foretold.

And so with bereavements. There may be some who can recall some sharp, unwarned affliction which to have foreseen would have been to the heart an agony beyond its capacity to endure. It was the *stunning* qualities that belonged to the blow's suddenness that made it tolerable ; it was the *ether* of *unexpectedness* which enabled the sufferer to sustain a pain which otherwise would have been beyond his strength. And it is one of God's tenderest providences, that often this oblivion to the coming shock continues, to those to whom it would be greatest, when with those less near the eye is opened, so that the heart that would be otherwise crushed, is able cheerfully to persevere in its ministry of love. Hoping with hope and against hope, such



is the philosophy written on this veil by which the future is shut off. I do not know how we could bear it were it otherwise. I do not know where would be the brightness left to life were this veil withdrawn. To those who ever followed a child to the grave, — what years of hope, of delight, of the sweetest pleasure that earth affords, would have been lost ; with what leaden skies would those years have been overhung, could that death have been foreseen ! How would it have been possible to have looked on that childish face without the bitterest of pangs ! And the *future* — how with that ? Who is there that may not in a few months be summoned to that sternest and most awful of scenes, — the parting with our most loved ? To whom may not soon be assigned the solitary house where no longer is heard the voice at once most familiar and most cherished ? And what a stupor would fall over us were this revealed ; how would each step forward be only a step into deeper gloom ; how would the fountain of affection pour forth not love, but bitterness, and horror, and despair. It is in mercy that God *conceals* as well as *reveals*. It is to make this life a true period of probation, in which grow not only the noblest virtues, but the most refining affections of heart, that the future is thus covered by a veil.

Yet there was One before whose eye this veil was lifted ; One who, in assuming humanity's griefs, took not humanity's blindness, but united grief's dread anticipation with its present pang. From the outset of His public ministry the desertion and horror of its close stood out fully before His Divine eye. "I have a baptism," so He spoke almost at the outset, "to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."

Even in the glory of the Mount of Transfiguration, when, in communion with His celestial visitants, "they spake," so it is recorded, "of the decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem." Then, as the event drew nigh, He went forth to meet it with a full knowledge of its approach. "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the Chief Priests and Scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles, to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him." And when the last sharp blow was about to fall, "Jesus, knowing all things that were to come upon Him, went forth." He stood alone, therefore, in bearing the full burden of human affliction, for He bore its anticipation as well as its shock. It brings the loveliness and grandeur of His character more fully before us when we recollect that thus foreseeing He shrank not back, neither turned with averted eye from those whom He knew would desert and betray Him; would scoff Him, and nail Him to the tree. He drew not back, but calmly went forward to the cross. He reproached not, but blessed, and healed, and pleaded, yet not for Himself but for them. There is something in this combination of tenderness, of pre-science, of power, which in itself proclaims the Divine, and leads us to kneel and cry, "All hail unto Thee, O Christ, despised and rejected of men, bearing for us the foreseen cross." And as we thus gaze and worship, other features in the Master appear. He was chastised for our iniquities; the burden of our sins was upon Him; and this He bore that we might be saved. It was the fuller cup that He took, leaving the lesser to us; He sheltered us from a storm which was greater than we could bear, sustaining its full shock. The doctrine

of His substituted sacrifice for us, therefore, ripens to its fulness as we view His life and passion in this light : it was a finished work, a full mantle ; a robe whose protection from the judgments we deserve is complete. Tremble not, then, O believer, who takest refuge in Him, in a loving and living faith, for the salvation of the Lord is sure. And in all your sufferings and griefs, and bereavements and fears, lean on Him in perfect trust, knowing that more than this He bore for the love of you, and that there is no pang you can bear which He cannot Himself feel, as your just and merciful High-priest. But what will it be to be left to bear alone, unsheltered, and unsoothed, the full storms of those eternal pains where the despair of a certain future of wretchedness is joined to the remorse for an abused past !

## CHAPTER IV.

### LITURGY.

L ORD, teach *us* to pray, as John also taught his disciples ;” and in answer to this petition our blessed Lord set forth a prayer, which, precious and obligatory as it is, must constitute, from its very brevity, but a small fraction of the petitions offered on occasions of stated public worship. And the omission is most remarkable. History gives no other example of the institution of a religious communion whose founders did not include in its articles a directory for public worship. And yet so far from such being the case with Christianity, our Lord, in His reply to His disciples, leaves the whole mode and material of public worship undetermined ; and His Apostles exercised with equal scrupulousness the same reserve. There is no form of prayer set forth in the New Testament except the Lord’s Prayer ; and while we have frequent mention of prayers being offered, of the breaking of bread, and of baptism, the only two prayers of the Apostles which are recorded in words, had reference to such extraordinary occasions as make them unsuitable for the usual purposes of worship.<sup>1</sup> To what, then, is this remarkable and evidently designed omission of a settled form

<sup>1</sup> Acts i. 24 ; iv. 24.

either for worship or the administration of the sacraments to be traced ?

And first, clearly not to *disapprobation* of a liturgical form. If such disapprobation, on so important a point, were to be expressed, it would be expressed distinctly ; and besides this, the silence strikes deeper : it reaches to the order of all worship, of whatever type. And if the test of *presumption* is to be resorted to, the presumptions all are that liturgical worship was at least not discountenanced by our Lord. He certainly worshiped according to the liturgy in use in the Jewish Church. He showed that there was no principle against liturgical worship, by setting forth at least one form of prayer, — a prayer which, as in the plural number, implies that its first scope is that of joint, as distinguished from individual, use. He attached peculiar efficacy to prayers in which His people “ shall agree together touching something they shall ask in His name ; ” and this agreement requires some sort of joint prior preparation. And again, liturgies sprang up in the Primitive Church at a period so early as to raise an almost irresistible presumption that liturgical worship of some kind was common under the directions of the Apostles themselves. And then, how essential, we may well argue, must have been a grave, settled, common worship, to communities so uninstructed and so heterogeneous, as those which made up the early Church. If now a liturgy is one of the most effective instruments of Christian education ; if it brings up the young, by their holiest memories, in the true faith ; if it is the only adequate method of introducing to us in due order the Christian Year in its spiritual fulness and power ; if now, when prepared with devout comprehensive-

ness, it is a more effective agent of spirituality than is an extemporaneous system, in which all depends on the gifts, the culture, the doctrine, or the tone of the minister for the time being ; if now one man's liberty in public prayer is often every body else's enthrallment, and the only true liberty is a common form agreed to by all ; — if thus, even with ourselves, orthodoxy, spirituality, and liberty unite so largely in recommending some sort of a liturgy, how eminently must this have been the case in the early Church, where the people were comparatively untutored, and where on public worship, religious instruction so largely depended. In view, then, of the individual usages of the Lord and his Apostles, in view of the practice of the early Church, in view of the wants of that Church, we have no right to connect the omission, in the New Testament, of liturgical presumption with any thing like a disapprobation of a liturgical form. What, then, does so remarkable an omission teach ?

And first, we may find an answer in the truth that *prayer is not man's mechanical repetition of God's precepts, but man's voluntary response to God's revealed word.* Formularies of all kinds become mechanical just in proportion as they are arbitrarily imposed. How dully, for instance, do the forms of our common-law courts sound to the officers compelled by law to repeat them, and how vivid and momentous they are to those not under such constraint, but who are individually concerned in their application. How sharply does the arraignment of a prisoner, and the swearing of a jury, cut into the consciousness of the prisoner himself ; yet how smoothly do the same forms float over the attention of crier and clerk. I do not say that this tells against a liturgy ; because a liturgy, in a Protestant communion,



is taken not as divinely prescribed, but as the choice of the worshiper himself. But I do say that this passiveness on the worshiper's part is apt to rise just in proportion as a liturgy is supposed to be verbally prescribed and limited by the express direction of God. Hence the tendency in the Romish Church, which claims this authority, to turn its prayers into formulas used largely in an unknown tongue, and designated by their first words, and packed up, as it were, and labelled in this way, and attached to beads, recited as if by title. A missionary who penetrated into Tartary a few years since, mentions a habit he there observed in the native priests, of attaching particular prayers to the spokes of a wheel, and then, on giving the latter a whirl, supposing their devotions were properly offered. Devout as are many members of the Romish Church, the idea that their prayers are made up by an infallible authority, and that they are complete in themselves by God's own fiat, tends very often to the notion that with them human participation has nothing to do, and that they are to be offered up, as far as possible, unalloyed by human choice or human thought. It is a vicarious worship; if the priest does not intercede for the worshiper, the prayer does. And the silence of our Lord on this point, while it strengthens the reasons for a liturgy in public worship, by enhancing the responsibility of the exercises in which we thus engage, unites with the express utterances of Scripture in warning us how thoroughly we must throw our choice, our judgment, our consciousness, our affections, into the petitions we offer to His throne. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "Use not *vain* repetitions, as the heathen do." "Pray without ceasing."

“Pray with the understanding.” “Men ought always to pray and not to faint.” And then the Lord’s silence on this point seems to add : “Listening and answering are mine ; praying, yours. See then that prayer indeed be yours. Choose the words ; choose them gravely and ably ; choose them as individuals in personal prayer ; choose them, it may be, as a Church, for congregational prayer ; but choose them as *yours* ; and with all your powers of attention and supplication, approach the throne.”

And then, a second reason for this omission may be found in *the universality of the Church*. It would have been easy to have framed a single liturgy which would have satisfied the wants of the first disciples ; but very soon, as the Church expanded, a system so narrow would have been a great impediment to growth. For, notice the varied elements which the Church was destined to comprehend. Almost at the outset are gathered together “Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia ; Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians,” — nations embracing almost every peculiarity of language and of blood. And then, when the Church began to take organic shape, how varied were the phases of civilization which she was to meet and absorb. On this very question of worship, remember how the Latin intellect tended to comprehensive generalization ; the Greek, to refined individualization ; the Oriental, to mystic contemplation. And then, even in our own time, after so many centuries of religious and commercial assimilation, how prominently do these



contrasts of race start out, not merely between the inhabitants of distinct countries, but between those of distinct races living on the same soil. An eminent clergyman of the North of Ireland tells us that, during the Crimean war, he had occasion to see successively a company of Irish soldiers, a company of English soldiers, and a company of Scottish soldiers, parting with their friends. "The parting of the English was undemonstrative but hearty and deep ; it was an attempted cheer ending in gushing tears, which they neither encouraged or discouraged. The Scottish women waved their hands, and had then to turn away to bury and hide their faces and the rolling tears. The Irish let it all out in unrestrained bursts, and loud and affecting wails."<sup>1</sup> Such are the variations of national temperament in the expression of emotion ; and in individual temperament the variations, if more subtile and numerous, would be scarcely less marked. "There are so many kinds of voices in the world," so speaks St. Paul, "and none of them without signification."<sup>2</sup> The gospel dispensation does not force these voices into one key and tone, but draws each to itself, according as each is best able to utter its prayer and praise.

So it is that our blessed Lord left no liturgical form except one prayer, which is in the nature rather of a common base of worship than a universal structure ; and so it is that the Primitive Church, at the earliest period to which history takes us, possessed a series of liturgies, each more or less free, and each adapted to the use of specific provinces or districts. There were diver-

<sup>1</sup> *The Ulster Revival*, etc., a pamphlet by the Rev. Jas. McCosh, LL. D. 1859.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 10.

sities of order ; there were varieties of expression ; there were openings for non-liturgical prayer ; there was a liberty which would have been inconsistent with a divinely prescribed liturgy, and which was at the same time essential to a Catholic Church which was to embrace all nations and tongues.<sup>1</sup> For men of all varieties of temperament were to join in that worship : men, some of whom would find their most natural expression in symbolism ; men, also, of passionate temperament and coarse temper, to whom the rude and

<sup>1</sup> *The Christian Remembrancer*, a paper very far opposed to liturgical liberalism, thus fairly states the case with the early Church : —

“ It does not seem as if, at first, any thing more than the simple outlines of a ritual were given, fixing the few essential parts, and leaving the rest free. The very diversities of order in the Liturgies is a sign of this, still more the variations of expression, and, so far as we can judge from history and extant remains, those variations were greater in the early than in the later ages. The object of the requests, the evils to be deprecated, the persons for whom intercession should be made, were in the main fixed ; beyond this it was left to the discretion and prayerful spirit of the Bishop of each church to choose the expression, to enlarge the subjects, to extend and contrast the fulness of his prayers. Hence we read in St. Justin Martyr, that the celebrant prayed and gave thanks *ὡς ἡ δύναμις αὐτῷ*. If a form were now found which professed to be a fixed, formal Liturgy of any church, or any number of churches, in the Ante-Nicene period, the very fact of its professing to be such would throw the strongest suspicion on its genuineness.” — *London Christian Remembrancer*, May, 1854.

The Preface to our Common Prayer-book recites the truth on which primitive usage was based : —

“ It is a most invaluable part of that blessed liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, that in His worship, different forms and usages may be without offence allowed, provided the substance of the faith be kept entire.”

The Articles of the Church of England speak to the same effect : “ It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly alike : for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men’s manners, so that nothing be ordained against God’s word.” — Art. xxxiv.

vehement cry for aid would be the most natural utterance ; men whose communion would be that of adoration ; men of calmer nature, whose instinct and comfort it would be to place their wants, their confessions, their thanksgivings, with systematic and classic completeness before the Divine Throne. In that Church was to be subtle Greek and stately Roman ; mystic Alexandrian and precise Jew ; scholar and barbarian, bond and free ; and in that Church was each to find instruction and peace.<sup>1</sup>

And *we* must be equally flexible and comprehensive, if we would enlarge ourselves as a true branch of the Catholic Church of Christ. For Christ speaks not to one line of tastes, but to all ; not to one line of temperament but to all ; not exclusively to the contemplative, or the fervid, or the refined, or the ignorant ; not exclusively to him who receives the truth only through elementary statement, nor exclusively to him who receives the truth only through symbol and illustration ; but comprehensively to all, each approaching Him through the several avenues of expression which He Himself has framed. "Thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall *all flesh* come." "What *God* hath cleansed that call not thou common." Dare not to

<sup>1</sup> The Romish Church has understood this, varying her services as she does from the gorgeous ceremonial to the preaching by cross or station, where the priest's passionate appeal is preceded only by a moment's prayer ; and extending her missionary organizations, so that for deeds of mercy she offers the Carmelites, passing through their rounds of mercy to sick and starving ; and for the scholastic work of the Church, the Benedictines ; and for its missionary labors, the Paulists and Passionists, uniting often the simplest machinery with the most powerful vernacular eloquence. The Church of Rome has sanctioned many abuses, and has been sadly false to her sacred trust, but she has been wise in this, — the flexibility of the liturgical system she adopts.

close up any of the paths through which the sinner approaches the Lord ; but if thou canst, stand by the opening to each, and invite the ignorant, the careless, the self-deceived, the slave of sense and of sin to enter in ; invite each in the tongue that he best understands, to implore the Saviour of souls for pardon and life.

So it is then — and this is the sum of the teaching we have just considered — that Christ speaks to *all*, and He speaks to *you*. He speaks to ALL : “ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; ” — “ Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He speaks to all in *His* terms, — an inflexible, absolute message it is, salvation through the cross ; but *you* must answer in *yours*. *You* must answer, not in another man’s nature but your own ; not in form but in spirit ; in the full single earnestness of your own heart must you plead with the God of hosts, and offer as your own the prayers by which you approach His throne. REVELATION is of GOD ; PRAYER, of MAN.

## CHAPTER V.

### CREEDS.

THE remarks which have been made on the omission in the New Testament of any prescribed liturgy for public worship, apply in many respects to the absence of creeds and catechisms. It is in every view probable that some such formularies were set forth, if not by the Apostles, at least by the evangelists and teachers whose labors they directed. Compendiums of doctrine, suitable for the particular wants of the times, — catechisms for the young, if not for adults, — are among the first necessities of religious instruction ; and in the apostolic age they were at least as much needed as in our own. The doctrine was then entirely new. It was contained in a large number of books, partly historical, partly prophetic, and partly exegetical, hortatory, and practical ; but in none of these any thing like systematic articles of faith were set forth.

The people who comprised the Apostolic Church were most of them ignorant of letters ; and even were it otherwise, the want of copies of the sacred record must have made it necessary for them to depend very largely upon oral instructions. Such instructions would naturally have taken a compendious and systematic shape, and in this shape would have been put on record, even supposing that no creeds or catechisms were set forth by common consent. The omission, then, of such creeds

and catechisms from the New Testament, is a very remarkable fact. It is so unparalleled in religious history ; it is so antecedently improbable when we view the nature of the work and the duties of the inspired penmen, that we can readily understand how one of the most acute of modern divines should consider such an omission as in itself proof of the divine authorship of the Gospel revelation.<sup>1</sup> “An omission which is, on all human principles, unaccountable, amounts to a moral demonstration of the divine origin of our religion. For that which cannot have come from *Man*, must have come from *God*.”<sup>2</sup>

I. But it is with the *teachings* of this omission that we have now to do. And those teachings may be best collected by considering the reasons on which we may reverentially suppose such an omission to be based.

These reasons we may thus state :—

1st. Such a compendium would supersede the books of Scripture as they now exist. It would act as a statute acts on the common law : the histories, biographies, prophecies, and exhortations on which the compendium would be based would cease to be consulted ; they would be absorbed in such compendium, and it alone could be the authoritative guide. The consequences of this would be as follows :—

(1.) Those processes of individual thought which God now makes the prerequisite of all conception of truth, would be no longer exercised as to that which is the profoundest and most important truth of all. Observe how it is in the natural world. God has not been pleased to write a compendium of science on the skies, or to im-

<sup>1</sup> Whately's *Essays*, 3d Series, p. 119. London, 1850.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.



plant it among the intuitions of the mind. On the contrary, scientific truth is ascertained by induction and by induction alone. Thus God neither engraved the chart of the Gulf Stream on the waters, nor revealed it as a scientific conclusion to the mind ; but He appointed in the Gulf of Mexico a reservoir by whose tropical fires the waters of this wonderful current were to be heated ; He opened a channel through which it was to flow through the colder waves of the Atlantic ; and then, He directed its final action to the shores of Great Britain, converting what would otherwise have been a coast as inhospitable as that of Newfoundland into a region in which unite almost every constituent of commercial success, as well as almost every climatic element which serves to build up a hardy, enterprising, and high-hearted race. But it is with the facilities lent to navigation by the Gulf Stream that we have now to do ; and remember here that the direction and force of the Gulf Stream were never compendiously revealed by God, but were left to be inferred from a vast field of facts, widely scattered, and requiring great industry in their collocation and great care in their comparison, as well as the exercise of individual judgment in the conclusion to which they led. God has in fact ordained these processes of labor and of reasoning as the prerequisite to all conception of His natural laws ; and we may therefore presume that He would make these same processes the prerequisite to the conception of the truths of grace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since the text was written, I have met the following : — “ So is the outer world fixed, determinate, palpable to the unerring senses, the same now as it was two thousand years ago, yet science has been progressive ; generation after generation has learned to see more in Nature, and to understand it better ; and there are still measureless treasures of this knowledge reserved for generations yet unborn. And does not

He has, in wonderful richness and variety, placed before us the materials from which these truths may be drawn. Over these the soul must itself ponder ; and such is the plainness of the divine records, such their wonderful variety, such the multitudinous avenues of human apprehension to which they in turn open, that there is no devout student, no matter how simple his understanding or how narrow his range of extraneous information, but may conclude from them that creed which teaches trust in God ; redemption from sin by the obedience and death of Christ ; and a holy life as the product of a loving and faithful heart.<sup>1</sup>

the history of the Church prove that *this is the very course which was prescribed for man*, in order that he *might attain to a reasonable, systematic knowledge of divine things*? Here, too, truths which in one age are almost latent, or recognized singly and insulatedly by faith, on the authority of a positive declaration, are brought out more distinctly by subsequent ages, and are ranged in their mutual connection, in their position as parts of the system of truth, and in their relation to the rest of our knowledge concerning the nature and destinies of man. Meanwhile God's Word stands fast, even as the heavens and the earth, and is the mine from which every new system is extracted, and the canon whereby it is to be tried; and as more than fifty generations have drawn the nurture of their hearts and minds from it, so will generation after generation to the end of the world." — Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, note G. p. 246. To this it may be added that this ripening in the appreciation of Divine Truth is no more to be compared to the "development" of the Romish Church, than is the truth uncovered by Galileo to the Brahmin's fiction that the earth rests on an elephant. The progressive reception of truth by the devout study of God's Word by the churches, brings out the treasure hid in the field; the "development" by a corrupt Church substitutes, in place of this treasure, base coin.

See, also, Goulburn's *Study of Scripture*, ch. iii., iv.

<sup>1</sup> This broadness of Scripture, as a field for the induction of doctrine, is well traced in Burns's well-known lines: —

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,  
How Abram was the friend of God on high,  
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage  
With Amalek's ungracious progeny :



And it is a striking fact, that each successive writer in the New Testament, instead of giving a compendium of what had been already written, adds to the field of induction from which such a compendium is to be drawn by the individual soul. Thus, as has been well said by Bishop Ellicott, St. Matthew has written Annals, St. Mark, Biography, St. Luke, History, and St. John, Dramatic Portraiture. The Acts of the Apostles is an independent book of history, covering a new subject matter ; and the Epistles are in the main specifically adapted, each to meet a particular want, or to touch a particular audience, or to combat a particular error. St. John, when at Patmos, might well have been looked upon as likely to give a compendium of doctrine, if such a compendium was within the divine plan ; but instead of this, he produced that wonderful book which added to the inspired records the mystic revelation of the future Church and world. Here, then, the materials for induction were complete ; they embrace the Saviour's life and death, viewing them in four independent relations ; they embrace history of the past, and prophecy of the future ; they embrace the application of

Or how the royal bard did groaning lie  
 Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire ;  
 Or Job's pathetic plaint and wailing cry ;  
 Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire ;  
 Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,  
 How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;  
 How HE who bore in heaven the second name,  
 Had not on earth whereon to lay his head :  
 How his first followers and servants sped  
 The precepts sage they wrote to many a land :  
 How he who lone in Patmos banished,  
 Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,  
 And heard great Babylon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command."

this history to the heart in its varied phases, — an application not systematic and general, but particular and concrete. And then the command goes forth, “SEARCH.” Individual study is to be invoked. There must be a thoughtful comparison of text with text. The mind is not to receive the truth at short-hand, as by some royal road ; but what is true of all other truths is eminently true of this. It must be dug out by labor as treasure hidden in the field ; the mind must ponder over it, and must survey the whole field for study, feeling that to neglect any portion would be to lose the meaning of the whole. “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were *written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Holy Scriptures, might have hope.*” Learning and patience ; these are the great qualities which the Scriptures invoke ; and comfort is the reward, — comfort in the conquering of doubt, comfort in the wonderful light which is kindled when text is fused with text ; and comfort in the precious meanings which, day after day unfold themselves, making more and more clear the verifications of revelation, and more and more precious the truths of grace. God gives in scriptures the materials from which man forms his belief ; — but the creed, the CREDO, the CONFESSION, the BELIEF, is *man's* conclusion and response. And the creed is withheld by God in order that it may be heartily and intelligently given by man, after patient study of the sacred text. And this patience, this constant study, this struggling with and conquest of doubt ; this discovery day after day of values still more precious and blessed in the treasure hid in the field ; this long striving, this quiet pondering, this delightful appropriation of truth after truth, each glowing more and more brightly

as it is intelligently sought and prayerfully studied ;— these belong to the verifying of the CREED from the text of the Inspired Word.<sup>1</sup>

(2.) Should such a compendium of divinity be included in the sacred records, it would revolutionize the relations of man to God. For such a compendium, by the very assumption on which it is called for, must be a complete exhibition of divine wisdom, and man, in receiving it, would be resolved into an omniscient mirror reflecting back an omniscient God. All choice, comparison, doubt, probation, subordination, and humility, would be destroyed.

(3.) By such a process the reception of divine truths would be endangered in heart as well as in intellect. "Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them ;" such is the process by which the Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent describes the appropriation of Scripture to the spiritual comfort of the soul. It is true that a mere formula is not of necessity incapable of this digestion, for in many cases it is spiritually appropriated, either at first or after the action of time. But the

<sup>1</sup> "Supposing such a summary of gospel-truths had been drawn up, and could have been contrived with such exquisite skill as to be sufficient and well adapted for all, of every age and country, what would have been the probable result? There would have been no room for doubt, no call for vigilant attention in the investigation of truth, none of that effort of mind which is now requisite in comparing one passage with another, and collecting instruction from the scattered, oblique, and incidental references to various doctrines in the existing Scriptures ; and in consequence, none of the excitement of the best feelings, and that improvement of the heart, which are the natural, and doubtless the designed, result of an humble, diligent, and sincere study of the Christian Scriptures." — "In fact all study, properly so called, of the rest of Scripture, all lively interest in its perusal, would have been nearly superseded." Whately's *Cautions*, No. xxv. p. 444. See also Bishop Hinds' *Inquiry into the Proofs of Inspiration*, p. 79.

example of the Church of Rome shows us that these formulas may remain in the heart as unassimilated and unappropriated as are those frozen animals which an iceberg retains lifeless but unchanged for centuries. If, as has been already seen, induction is the process by which the *intellect* most readily receives truth, so this process of assimilation, by which chapter after chapter, text after text, are gradually received and appropriated, is that by which truth is most readily received by the *heart*. "Holy Scripture thus progressively unfolding what it contains," says Archbishop Trench, "might be likened fitly to some magnificent landscape on which the sun is gradually rising, and ever as it rises is bringing out one headland into light and prominence, and then another ; anon kindling the glory-smitten summit of some far mountain, and presently lighting up the recesses of some near valley which had hitherto abided in gloom ; and so traveling on till nothing remains in shadow, no nook or corner hid from the light and heat of it, but the whole prospect stands out in the clearness and splendor of the brightest noon."<sup>1</sup> There is a spiritual blessing, then, in this, the *reserve* of Scripture, which no revelation of scientific theology could impart. For it is the base of the Christian's growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord.

2d. Such a compendium would imperil church universalization. Judaism was meant to be local, and temporary, and eclectic ; and the religion prescribed for the Jews was marked by symbols and a ritual adapted to their specific character and era. Christianity is meant to be universal, and permanent, and catholic, and it possesses no creed or ritual divinely prescribed. It be-

<sup>1</sup> Trench, *Hulsean Lecture on the Development of Scripture*.

longs to no type or nationality of men ; it is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian or Scythian, bond or free ; but it is every thing to each, and each is equally embraced within its bounds.

So it was with its Master, who, unabsorbed by any nationality, uncontrolled by any form of human temperament, has condescended to bless and sanctify each of them to Himself. He does not destroy these peculiarities of national and individual character ; He does not exact an average and uniform type ; but visiting them as they are, He condescends to draw each of them to Himself. It is with Him as with the portrait whose eyes meet and respond to the eyes of all turned to it ; He looking into the souls of all who gaze on Him, whoever they may be, and wherever and whenever they may live. As in heaven, one star differeth from another star in glory, so on earth, men are infinitely varied in the modes in which they receive God's teachings ; but Christ comes as a Saviour to all, each finding the centre of life in Him, He planting one common, supreme truth in each. Qualified and controlled by no form of religious temperament, He qualifies and draws all to himself ; He, the one sole being who ever trod the earth, who teaches, not partial truth, but the whole ; who is not national, but universal ; not eclectic, but Catholic ; not of one time, but of all times ; not one, but all ; not the creature of side-lights and influences, but the one GOD-MAN, unmoulded by any one age, country, or world, yet occupying all.

Christ, then, being the one common centre, the inspired records are the channels through which His grace streams forth on men. In early Christian art, as we are reminded by Archbishop Trench, this diverging

power of Scripture was illustrated by an often-repeated symbol, "wherein from a single cross-surmounted hill four streams are seen welling out ; and these streams were likened to "the four rivers of Paradise, that together watered the whole earth, going each a different way, and yet issuing from a single head."<sup>1</sup> Nor can we study the sacred text without seeing, that while each of these streams contains the same waters of grace, drawn from the same fountain, they appreciably separate, so far as concerns the regions which they reach. Thus St. Matthew turned towards the devout Jew ; St. Mark, to the practical Roman ; St. Luke spoke to men as grouped by the then common and almost universal Greek tongue ; St. John, to humanity as united by that still more universal sympathy produced by a common sense of sin, and a mystic yearning for the truth of God. So as to St. John, both in his epistles and gospel, as contrasted with St. Paul. Remember that the Western and Eastern minds, in reference to revealed truth, rested on widely separated planes. The Western mind pondered over the divine nature as it came in contact with man ; the Eastern, over the divine nature in its relations to itself. What stirred the West to its inmost depths were the questions of free-will and of sin ; what most agitated the East were refinements on the doctrine of the Three in One.<sup>2</sup> Western Orthodoxy took *man's* nature as a basis, and ascended from thence to God's justice and redemption ; Eastern Orthodoxy took *God's* nature as a basis, and descended from this to *man's* sin and salvability. And it would seem as if while St. Paul's dogmatic writings were pointed directly

<sup>1</sup> *Hulsean Lecture on the Manifoldness of Scripture.*

<sup>2</sup> Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol. I. pp. 22-24.



to the Western mind, so St. John was to be more peculiarly the Apostle to the East. Observe how St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, begins with man's sinfulness and ruin as a base ; and how St. John, in his Gospel, begins with the mystical nature of God. " Who can fail to see in the great Apostle of Tarsus, in his discursive intellect, in his keen dialectics, in his philosophic training, the man armed to dispute with Stoic and Epicurean at Athens ; who should teach the Church how she should take the West for her inheritance ? Nor less was he the man who, by the first struggles of his inner life, and the consequent fulness and power with which he brought out the scheme of our justification, should become the spiritual forefather of the Augustines and Luthers, of all those who have brought out for us, with the sense of personal guilt, the sense, also, of personal deliverance, the consciousness of a personal standing of each one of us before God. And in St. John — the full significance of whose writings for the Church is probably yet to be revealed, and it may be, will not appear till the coming in of the nations of the East into the fold — we have the progenitor of every mystic, in the nobler sense of the word, — of every contemplative spirit that has delighted to sink and to lose itself, and the sense of its own littleness, in the brightness and in the glory of God. Shall we not thank God, shall we not recognize as part of His loving wisdom, that thus none are left out ; that, *while there are evidently among men two leading types of mind, He has made provision for them both ; for the discursive and the intuitive ; for the schoolman and the mystic ; for them who trust through knowing to see, and for them, also, who believe that only through seeing they can know ; that, whatever in their*



*intellectual condition men may be, the net is laid out to catch them."*<sup>1</sup>

But if from the cross these several roads diverge, reaching all the distinct regions of human temperament and intellect, so on the very tracks through which grace travels man-ward, may faith travel God-ward. God has not opened these various approaches to the human heart in order that they should be barred up, whenever the sinner seeks to approach by the same channel by which he was reached. The channel is one of ingress as well as of egress; it is open for the sinner when he seeks the word, as well as for the word seeking the sinner. And one of the great blessings attending the absence of a divine compendium of systematic theology is, that there is thus opened in Scripture such a liberty as will embrace within its gracious promises all phases which a devout faith in Christ may assume. The extent and limit of this liberty I will for a moment illustrate.

(1.) Take, for instance, the question of predestination and free-will; and here we will find this liberty admirably stated by Cecil: "No man will preach the gospel so freely as the Scriptures preach it," writes that most able and faithful divine, "unless he will submit to talk like an Antinomian, in the estimation of a great body of Christians; nor will any man preach it so practically as the Scriptures, unless he will submit to be called, by as large a body, an Arminian. Many think they have found a middle path, which is, in fact, neither one thing nor another, since it is not the incomprehensible but grand scheme of the Bible."<sup>2</sup> "If there be not free-will in God," so exclaims St. Augus-

<sup>1</sup> Trench, *Hulsean Lecture on the Manifoldness of Scripture*.

<sup>2</sup> See fully on this point, Mosley *On Predestination*, p. 77.

tine, "there is no GOD to save us ; if there be not free-will in man, there is no MAN to be saved." So, in setting forth the gospel, the faithful expositor will press the more strongly, sometimes the one and sometimes the other of these great truths, always keeping within the limit which forbids him to hold either the one or the other otherwise than in its full force.

(2.) And so with regard to the doctrine of conversion, supposing conversion to mean in this sense a moral change of heart and life. And on this point Tholuck thus truly speaks : "According to the diversity of natural dispositions will men be brought, at different periods, to the sense of the value of such a faith. One passes through the sharpest conflict at his first awakening ; another, in the season of base lukewarmness which so frequently follows the first glow of love ; a third is drawn to Jesus with feelings and views not strongly defined, and only after long intercourse with Him learns to know his own corruption, and to rely firmly on the atonement, when he has already tasted somewhat of the Saviour's grace. This latter way God often chooses with minds of strong powers, but whose depravity is proportionally deep ; who, if they had been made fully sensible of their own corruption before Christ had been manifested to them, would have sunk stupefied in the arms of despair. For this reason it is impossible to lay down any settled modes of conversion ; the Spirit of God 'bloweth where He listeth, and as He listeth.' Only earthly things are to be determined by line and measure ; divine things are not *contrary to*, but *above* our line and measure." And this question is independent of that of baptismal grace. Luther attributed to the sacraments a very high degree of spiritual effi-

cacy. Zuinglius held them to be mere commemorative exercises. Calvin took an intermediate position between the two, holding that the sacraments, like the sacred text, are the vehicle of divine truth, but involve no *opus operatum*, and may be, in like manner, wrested to the destruction of those who unbelievably receive.<sup>1</sup> Yet Luther, Calvin, and Zuinglius held with equal rigor the same truth of the necessity of a conscious, voluntary moral change.

II. But I proceed to notice two objections which may be naturally offered to the proposition that the Bible sets forth no systematic creed, but that a creed is the *believer's* response to Revelation, which is the declaration of *God*. It is argued, *first*, that the individual liberty thus allowed is the parent of universal license. The position has been thus expressed : —

“ This is the book where each his dogma seeks,  
And this the book where each his dogma finds.”

But the falsity of this position will be seen from the following observations : —

(1.) So incompatible is an honest reception of the sacred text with such license, that there is scarcely a heresy whose advocates have not found it necessary to mutilate that text, or to affix to it a non-natural sense. Either, like Dr. Priestly, they declare that St. John,

<sup>1</sup> “ Quamobrem fixum maneat, non esse alias sacramentorum quam verbi Dei partes; quæ sunt offerre nobis ac proponere Christum, et in eo cœlestis gratiæ thesaurus: nihil autem conferunt aut prosunt nisi fide accepta.” Inst. iv. § 17. This high view is sustained throughout the same book. In his controversy with Westphel, he denied that he limited his belief to a merely spiritual presence in the Eucharist, and while rejecting the idea of a local presence of Christ's body, held to one that was *dynamical*. Hagenbach, *His. of Doct.* by Shedd, Vol. II. § 259, *note*.

like Homer, sometimes "noddled ;" or, like Strauss, they rarefy particular passages into myths ; or, like the Gnostics, they eliminate whole books ; or, like the Romanists, they affix a patristic gloss, which gloss varies according to the interpreter's mind.

(2.) That the variations of exegesis which arise among honest interpreters of the Word, who accept it as the sole rule of faith, spring, not from uncertainty in the sacred text, but from the differences of mental structure, is shown by the fact that there is no *creed* that is not in like manner affected by this variation.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Articles of the English Church were framed with peculiar care on the very questions of grace which have just been specifically noticed ; yet in the construction of these articles those same fundamental variations of standpoint are exhibited at least as freely as in the interpretation of the inspired records. No one can doubt, for instance, the loyalty of Tillotson to these Articles ; yet in what strong contrast is his interpretation to that of Toplady, equally honest in his devotion to these great symbols of faith ; and Calvinists and Arminians have differed as much about the Articles as they differed about the sacred text. So the Westminster Confession was drawn for the express purpose of determining those questions which the Thirty-nine Articles left open ; and yet, in the interpretation of this standard, the schools of Andover and Princeton differ, I apprehend, even more widely than do devout Arminians and Calvinists in the English Church. So no papal bull was able to quiet the Jansenist controversy ; but each new test increased the points on which interpreters differed. The more minute and copious the standards, the more numerous and refined became the questions at issue.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A.

(3.) Doctrinal formularies, from the abstractness and succinctness of their phraseology, open points of departure which cannot be found in the inspired narrative. The *abstract* has interpretations possible to it which are impossible to the *concrete*: the Idea, those which are impossible to the Fact. What theoretic statement, for instance, of the Redeemer's miraculous power could so close up controversy as the record of those miracles themselves? And hence it often has been the case that men who have rejected large portions of the sacred text, have subscribed, as in the case of Dr. Middleton, and of the mythical Lutheran interpreters, the most orthodox of creeds. The words "miracle," and "inspiration," and "Divine," they generalize into abstractions, or universal predicates of all God's works; but not so with the awful and isolated words and acts of our Lord.

(4.) God's promises are eminently to those who faithfully search His Word, as distinguished from "the traditions of men;" and a wisdom above all other wisdom is assured to those who, pondering over its sacred pages, and accepting them fully and in their natural sense, seek for light.<sup>1</sup> "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it."<sup>2</sup> "Search the Scriptures; . . . they are they which testify of me."<sup>3</sup> "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."<sup>4</sup> "Receive with meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your souls."<sup>5</sup> "The Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through Christ Jesus."<sup>6</sup> These promises are to the sacred text, and to that alone.

<sup>1</sup> Prov. viii. 34; John v. 39.

<sup>2</sup> John v. 39.

<sup>5</sup> James i. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Is. lv. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. x. 17.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 15.

(5.) History tells us that religious indifferentism is far more likely to be produced by the arbitrary and absolute imposition of a human test, than by that liberty which calls upon the soul devoutly to seek for truth in the sacred text. Thus there was far greater religious indifferentism in England during the operation of the Test Acts, than subsequent to their repeal. The reign of the first three Hanoverian kings, when these acts were in force, was one of disgraceful religious torpor, when almost all signed and conformed, but not many vitally and fervently believed. So indifferentism exists largely in the Romish Church. It is constantly avowed, while the standards of the Church are accepted ; and now, even under the mask of an outer submission to papal supremacy, it is questionable whether the great body of thinking men in that communion do not treat religion as a matter for the state, and not for the individual heart. Indifferentism exists, also, in our own New England, wherever philosophical superciliousness is permitted by society to hurl at religious earnestness anathemas which pretend to be as infallible as those of the Papal Court. Indifferentism, in fact, will always exist wherever you allow any external authority, whether it be that of a pretended infallible church, or that of a self-constituted but equally pretentious philosophical coterie, to override the convictions of the individual heart. But allow these convictions freely to form and express themselves, and the day for indifferentism is past. In matters political, indifferentism may well exist under a despotism which tramples down all individual expression of thought ; but political indifferentism cannot exist in a country such as ours where freedom of thought has full scope. And so in matters the-



ological ; and here, on this base of religious liberty, do I most confidently rest the doctrines of the cross. For, if our hearts are turned in prayer to honestly search the Scriptures ; if with meekness we receive the ingrafted word ; if we do this as conscious, responsible creatures, intent upon possessing ourselves of the Revelation of God ; if we come to the work undriven, not as if compelled by arbitrary authority to mechanically receive a prescribed formula, but as individuals determined to “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” the Divine message, it cannot be but that an earnest, living, saving faith in the Cross of Christ will be the reward.

2dly. But it may in the second place be objected to this position, that it supersedes the use of creeds as human standards of faith. So far from this being the case, I apprehend that this view makes them peculiarly necessary, for the following reasons :—

(1.) The creed thus becomes man’s response to God, as inspiration is God’s utterance to man. It is so from its very nature. “*Rehearse the articles of thy belief,*” so asks the Church of England in her Catechism ; and the answer is, “*I believe in God,*” &c. It is not, “*This is a perfect compendium of God’s plan of salvation ;*” but it is, “*I believe in certain grand though insulated truths.*” So virtually speak, in fact, all Christian communions, uniting as they do in this most general of symbols. And so particular communions and particular persons speak, when, in reference to points more minute, and distinctions more refined, they confess their faith.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “To *believe*, therefore, as the word stands in the first of the CREED, and not only so, but is diffused through every article and proposition of it, is to assent to the whole and every part of it, as to a certain and infal-



(2.) A creed is a protest against error, put forth for the purpose of specifically condemning such error. No creed claims to be a systematic exposition of *all* truth for *all* time ; it is simply a statement of such truth as is necessary to shut out a specific error by which the Church is at that time assailed. Thus, at the time of the formation of the Apostles' Creed, neither the divinity of Christ, nor the atoning merit of His blood, was doubted in the Church ; and these truths are implied rather than expressed in that venerable symbol. But the heresy that Christ did not actually suffer and die, but was represented at the passion by a phantom, — a heresy at that time prevalent, — was met by a distinct and particular statement of His crucifixion and death. So, at the formation of the Nicene Creed, the Arian heresy was that which was the most instant and perilous ; and this was met by asserting dogmatically the divinity and atoning sacrifice of the Lord. Then, at the time of the Reformation, the errors by which the truth was most closely assailed, were those of the ascription of divine authority to tradition ; salvation through human merit ; Pelagian views as to sin and grace ; Church infallibility ; the power of works of supererogation, and purgatory ; and these were met by specific statements of belief, necessary to preserve the Church's then orthodoxy and integrity. But it was never

lible truth *revealed by God* (who by reason of His infinite knowledge cannot be deceived, and by reason of His transcendent holiness cannot deceive), *and delivered unto us in the writings of the blessed Apostles and Prophets, immediately inspired, moved, and acted upon by God, out of whose writings this brief sum of necessary points of faith was first collected, and this is properly to believe, which is our first consideration ; so to say, I BELIEVE, is to make confession or external expression of this faith, which is the second consideration propounded.*" — Pearson *On the Creed*, Art. I.

pretended that the Thirty-nine Articles were a complete compendium of truth.<sup>1</sup> This on their face they disclaim. Particular churches, they declare, specifying those of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, "have erred ; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith."<sup>2</sup> And again, — "General councils may err, and have sometimes erred, even in things pertaining to God."<sup>3</sup> And then, again, — "It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places one, or strictly like ; for at all times they have been diverse, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word."<sup>4</sup> But it was against the then most dangerous heresies alone that the Thirty-nine Articles spoke ; and they contain no precise dogmatic utterance on the two questions by which the orthodoxy of the Church is now most closely pressed,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hook cites several authorities to this point, of which I quote one : "It is a mistake to imagine that creeds were at first intended to teach, in full and explicit terms, all that should be necessary to be believed by Christians. As heresies gave occasion, new articles were inserted ; not that they were originally of greater importance than any other articles omitted ; but the opposition made to some doctrines rendered it the more necessary to insist upon the explicit belief and profession of them." Waterland, quoted in Hook's *Dic. of the Church*, tit. *Creeds*. "When there is a revival of faith, if this revival coincides with, or is succeeded by, a period of energetic thought, a deeper or clearer insight will be gained into certain portions of truth, especially appropriate to the circumstances and exigencies of the age, and which have not yet been set forth in their fulness. Thus, to cite the two most memorable examples, the true doctrine of the Trinity was brought out more distinctly in the fourth century ; that of Justification by Faith, in the sixteenth ; *the prevalence of error acting in both cases as a motive and spur to the clearer demarcation and exposition of the truth.*" — Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, note G. p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Art. xix.

<sup>3</sup> Art. xxi.

<sup>4</sup> Art. xxxiv.

viz., eternal punishment and plenary inspiration. Creeds and articles, therefore, are like a line of fortresses by which a country is defended from enemies ; and which from time to time are built up on the side on which the enemy appears. They are therefore not extensions of the truth, but simply defenses ; and consequently, as the Sixth Article states, “ Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation ; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not *to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.*”

(3.) Creeds and articles become thus the tests of individual membership in the church by which they are imposed. They are not the inspired exponents of truth. This is shown by the fact that no such creeds or articles are set forth in the sacred text ; and that they are subject to that liability to error which belongs to all things human. They claim belief, not because imposed by the Church, venerable as that authority is, but when, as is stated in the Eighth Article of the Church of England, in reference to the early creeds, “ they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.” But while this is the sole base of authority on which they rest,<sup>1</sup> they are nevertheless final and absolute

<sup>1</sup> As to the meaning of the term “ Authority ” Archbishop Whately has some pertinent remarks in the Appendix to his Logic: “ This term is sometimes employed in its primary sense, when we refer to any one’s example, testimony, or judgment; as when we speak of correcting a reading in some book, on the authority of an ancient MS., giving a statement of some fact, on the authority of such and such historians, &c. In this sense the word answers pretty nearly to the Latin *Auctoritas*. It is a claim to deference. Sometimes it is employed as equivalent to ‘ *Potestas*,’ power; as when we speak of the authority of a magistrate, &c. This is a claim to *obedience*. It is in the former sense that it is used in our 20th Article, which speaks of the Church having *power* to decree *rites*

standards between the church that imposes them, and members of that church. Nor have men any claim to remain in such church, to hold its benefices, or enjoy its communion, if they maintain views in conflict with the tests it imposes. "Every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church, ordained only by men's authority, so that all things be done to edifying."<sup>1</sup> So "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith;" and though it is "not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word,"<sup>2</sup> yet, in questions concerning the membership in its own body, its own standards are the exclusive tests. These standards, then, become the tests of church membership, while the Scriptures are the sole tests of truth.<sup>3</sup> When the Church from time to time sets forth articles of belief, these are to be construed according to their natural sense. Whoever cannot accept them in such sense, has no right to remain in the church that imposes them.

III. It remains, then, for us to consider what are the *and ceremonies*, and *authority* in controversies of *faith*. On the other hand, each *particular* church has authority in the other sense, viz: Power over its own members, (as long as they choose to continue members,) to enforce any thing not contrary to God's Word."

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Art. xx.

<sup>3</sup> "If you ask whose judgment ought to take place, the judgment of the Church, or of every private Christian? I answer, the judgment of the Church of necessity *must take place as to external government, to determine what shall be professed and practised in her communion; and no private Christian has any thing to do in these matters.* But when the question is, what is right or wrong, true or false, in what we may obey and in what not, here every private Christian who will not believe without understanding, nor follow his guides blindfold, must judge for himself; and it is as much as his soul is worth to judge right." — Dean Sherlock, *Discourse concerning a Judge of Controversies*, p. 11.

practical consequences of this, the silence of Scripture, as to all creeds or articles of belief. And these practical consequences may be thus stated.

1st. As the Scriptures are the sole depositories of divine truth, we are admonished of what paramount importance it is for us to make them the objects of devout study. Some of the requisites of this study I now proceed to state.

— It should be with a pure intention ; with the honest desire of honoring God, and acquiring the knowledge of salvation through His word.

— For devotional reading we should select in course lessons from those portions which bear practically on our own hearts and lives ; pausing to apply each passage to ourselves in meditation and prayer. A careless reader cannot be a close walker with God. To an undevout reader the most profound texts are written in cipher ; prayer, and the Holy Spirit, are the keys by which their meaning is disclosed.

— Our attention should throughout be fixed on the Lord Jesus Christ, as Him whom it was the great object of Revelation to set forth. And the sacred record when thus lifted up towards Him, like the prism held between us and the light, not only displays Him in the fulness and manifoldness of His glory, but glitters itself with a lustre before unperceived.

— The sins and shames of Scripture characters should be applied to ourselves, with the words, “ *Thou art the man.*” Those things were given to us as ensamples, lest we, too, should fall.

— Threats as well as promises should be applied to our individual souls ; none so secure that he may not fall ; none so lost but that he may be reclaimed by the

full grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The doctrinal books (*e. g.* the Epistles) are not to be exclusively read in single chapters ; but at distinct periods we should read each of them through by itself, in this way drawing out its general character and scope.<sup>1</sup>

— Figurative language should be carefully distinguished from literal, lest the Infinite Presence of the Triune God be limited to symbol, or type, or ceremony, or place. Nor should any article of faith be based on “metaphors, parable, or single, obscure, and figurative text.”<sup>2</sup>

— Subtle speculations are to be avoided, it being remembered that it is the plain meaning that belongs to us, and that it is the immediate duty to which the Scriptures apply. The veil that God has dropped it is not for us to pierce.

— Our reading should be periodical, morning and night ; it should be thoughtful and devout. Texts of peace and instruction should be repeated to the sick and dying ; they should be so appropriated in the daily meditations of our life, that in our own dying hour they may be our comfort and stay.<sup>3</sup>

2d. And one other practical consequence remains to

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Locke lays great stress on acquiring this habit. “It must be repeated again and again, with a close attention to the tenor of the discourse, and a perfect neglect of the division into chapters and verses. On the contrary, the safest way is, to suppose that the epistle has but one business and aim, until, by a frequent perusal of it, you are forced to see that there are distinct independent matters in it, which will forwardly enough show themselves.” — *Preface to Treatise on the Epistles of Saint Paul*.

<sup>2</sup> Horne's Introduction, Vol. II. p. 669, from which some of the above points are taken.

<sup>3</sup> “Oratio et meditatio conjunctione necessaria sibi ad invicem copulantur. Et perorationem illuminatur meditatio, et in meditatione exardescit oratio.” — St. Bernard, *Opera*, tom. V. p. 260.



be considered ; and that is, the duty of a tender and comprehensive toleration of those who differ from us on points which the sacred text does not determine. For specific purposes, "every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by men's authority, so that all things be done to edifying ;" <sup>1</sup> but no visible church, or school in such church, has the right to break up the unity of the Church Invisible, by laying down tests other than those God's Word prescribes. "Holy Scripture" — and this article of the Anglican Church cannot be too frequently repeated — "containeth all things necessary to salvation ; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith ; or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Loyal must we indeed be to every ordinance of our Church, whether its source be human or divine. But while this loyalty must be scrupulously observed, we must jealously beware of breaking up the unity of that Holy Spiritual Church, which is the mystical body of our blessed Lord, by the introduction of tests based "on ceremonies or rites ordained only by man's authority." In things essential, unity ; in things non-essential, liberty ; in all things, charity. And of things essential, the only test is that which has just been pronounced ; they must be found in, or proved from, the Word of God, — whatever is not so, is not of the essence of faith. Our own Church must be obeyed in all things, ceremonial or doctrinal ; but in matters outside of scriptural prescription, not merely charity but liberty must be al-

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxxiv.



lowed to those who have adopted conclusions differing from our own.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor closes his great work on "Liberty of Prophecy," with an allegory to which almost every advocate of toleration has since then appealed. When Abraham was once sitting in his tent, — so he writes, quoting from a Jewish author, — an old man approached him, weary with age and travel. Him the patriarch received and entertained, until he discovered that his visitor refused to join with him in the adoration of the one true God. Abraham then thrust him ignominiously out; but afterwards God called Abraham, and asked him, "Where is the stranger whom thou didst entertain?" "I repelled him, because he would not worship Thee," was the reply. But God answered, "One hundred years have *I* suffered him, though *he* dishonored *me*; and couldst not thou endure him one night?"

So ran the tradition, and so spoke Bishop Jeremy Taylor on the question of the toleration of those who deny even a God. But when we rise to differences among devout followers of the Lord Jesus, we hear breathing in our ear injunctions still more sublime. It is no longer within the tent that we rest, sharing the patriarch's dignity and repose; but *without*, with the Man of Sorrows, the one Saviour of men, in the waste over which sweep the world's contempt and scorn. Sin, within the tent, may be reveling in the haughtiest indifference to the Divine message; but still that heavenly Visitor pleads, "Open, and let me in, for I bear the burden of thy sin; I die that thou mayest live; open, and I will sup with thee, and thou with Me." No upheaval of indignant rock by Him, the Almighty God; no flash of consuming lightning; only this tender pleading through

the long night of rebellious sin. There, with the Master, let us stand, bearing His reproach, breathing His spirit, striving at once for His zeal and His love. For as His messengers we have a sinful world to plead with and to win; and grievously will our trust be betrayed, and guilt-stained may be our hands, if we spend our strength and dishonor our cause by struggles with each other about points as to which His Word leaves each of us free. With the Lord Jesus, then, let us stand without the tent, setting forth His truth in the voice He has given each of us, knowing that there will be those in the wide world of sinners to whom that voice, feeble as it is, will speak with power. Let us stand with Him without the tent, and soon this world's blindness will be over, and in perfect light the triumphant Church will see truth as it is.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE VIRGIN MARY.

IT has pleased God to screen from us by a veil almost impenetrable any objects which might withdraw our thoughts from the worship of His dear Son. We observe this with regard to the souls of His departed saints, concerning whom we know not whether they are conscious of the strivings and yearnings of men, and whether the wishes and wants of those whom they loved on earth are the subject of their heavenly interest and care. The same veil, also, is cast over the Apostles of the New Testament Church, whose history, so far as earth is concerned, is singularly incomplete ; and of whom we have not one word of information subsequent to the period on which they entered on the glorious life of heaven.<sup>1</sup>

It is in respect to the Virgin Mary, however, that this reserve is most marked. Full as are the notices of her in connection with our Lord's miraculous birth, we hear almost nothing of her in relation to His public ministry, and nothing at all of her as one of the glorious host of heaven. It is true that Mary and Martha, Mary Magdalene, and "other women," are frequently mentioned as being among those who attended the Lord ;

<sup>1</sup> The contrast in this respect with Mohammedanism is very marked ; the performances of its saints and prophets in the next world being one of the chief features of its pretended revelation.

but the position of the Virgin, in spiritual matters, is clearly defined in that remarkable passage, when, upon one saying to Him, "Thy mother stands *without*, desiring to speak unto Thee;" "He stretched forth His hands towards His *disciples*, and said, *Behold my mother and my brethren!* For *whosoever* shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."<sup>1</sup> So in the marriage of Cana of Galilee, in answer to an intercession of Mary, he replied, "What have I to do with thee: Mine hour" (or the period appointed by Myself for the performance of this particular work) "is not yet come."<sup>2</sup> And the only interpretation we can assign to the preservation of this remarkable reply, is, that it was intended to show that in the exercise of His supernatural power, the Virgin Mother was utterly dissociated from the Divine Son. And what is at least equally remarkable, is the fact, which is the peculiar subject of this chapter, that *in the narrative of our Lord's divine work as the Mediator between God and man, Mary is throughout carefully screened from our eye.* Others who were employed by Him as missionaries of mercy and of power, are mentioned to us in this their sacred capacity; Mary never. A centurion intercedes for a sick servant, and the intercession was effective.<sup>3</sup> His disciples cry unto Him, "Lord, save us, we perish; and He arose, and calmed the sea."<sup>4</sup> A certain ruler worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live;"<sup>5</sup> and He came and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. In many

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 46-50.

<sup>2</sup> John ii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. viii. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. viii. 25, 26.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. ix. 18.

instances, after the Lord's ascension, the Apostles applied to Him for miraculous power, and in each case the prayer was granted. But we hear of no intercession made to Him by Mary except that in Cana of Galilee, and in that case the intercession was rebuked.

So, also, we have frequent mention of specific delegations of power. Thus, at one time, the Lord "called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases."<sup>1</sup> Then, again, He sent out seventy, with other powers.<sup>2</sup> Then, after the resurrection, the eleven were charged with the great work of evangelizing the world, and for this were endowed with miraculous gifts.<sup>3</sup> And in the infant Church, as narrated in the Acts of the Apostles, particular Apostles were specifically employed in miraculous work. Yet in no case is Mary mentioned as thus delegated or thus empowered.

And so, again, we are pointed to those who were the intimate attendants, and as it were counsellors of the Lord, during His obedience and passion. There were Peter, and James, and John, who were with Him at Tabor and at Gethsemane. There was John whom he so peculiarly loved, and who leaned on the Lord's breast at the Paschal Supper.<sup>4</sup> There was Peter to whom he said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, — thou art Peter, on this rock," — on the confession of My divinity, "I will build my church ;"<sup>5</sup> — Peter to whom He gave the keys ;<sup>6</sup> Peter on whom he looked with such melting tenderness in the judgment-hall ;<sup>7</sup> Peter to whom he gave the final command, "Feed my sheep."<sup>8</sup> There

<sup>1</sup> Luke ix. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxviii. 16 ; Luke xxiv. 49.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Luke xxii. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Luke x. 1.

<sup>4</sup> John xiii. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xvi. 19.

<sup>8</sup> John xxi. 17.

were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, who are specified as first at the sepulchre.<sup>1</sup> There were the disciples with whom He communed at Emmaus,<sup>2</sup> and those whom He made the chosen witnesses of His ascension.<sup>3</sup> Yet there is no notice of Mary in either of those relations, or as in any way the partaker of the counsels of the Lord when in His divine work. She was, it is true, at the cross ; but we are informed of this only incidentally, from the fact that she was committed to John's care, not John to her, as would have been the case had she been assigned a position of any thing like superior power ; and it is the *home* of John, not his office, with which her name is to be allied.<sup>4</sup> She is not mentioned as having even seen the Lord after the resurrection ; she performs no act in the New Testament Church. That she associated with the disciples at Jerusalem after His ascension, we are indeed informed,<sup>5</sup> but beyond this, there is no record. Of her subsequent life and death, copious as is the sacred narrative in other respects, not a word is told.

Why, then, we may well ask, is this remarkable silence preserved as to one so highly blessed of the Lord ; one who was herself honored by both the Old and New Testament Church as the mother of the Lord ; one who was a prophetess, uttering one of the most glorious hymns the sacred history records ; one who bore the Lord, and watched over His infancy, and carried Him on that mysterious Egyptian flight ? Why is this screen interposed whenever we would gaze on a form which,

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxiv. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxiv. 48.

<sup>4</sup> John xix. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Acts i. 14.



of all others in the New Testament records, is next to that of our Blessed Lord, surrounded with associations the most sacred and tender?

— Sometimes, when a great picture is to be studied, canopies of cloth are so hung on either side, as not merely to form a gradually contracting avenue to it, but to conceal whatever would distract the eye. And so it is with regard to the great central truth of revelation: God, manifest in the flesh. Thither all lines of history as well as prophecy converge. And on either side of its approaches, God, in the great gallery of His revealed Word, has mercifully dropped veils, so that nothing human should there appear which would draw us from the worship of His only begotten Son. Let us then inquire, 1st, what is this central truth; 2dly, to what abuses of it our fallen nature tends; and 3dly, how this practically applies to our hearts.

1st. The truth itself: and this the Nicene Creed very clearly states, when it tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ, “the only begotten Son of God;” “God of God, light of light, very God of very God; being of one substance with the Father;” “for us men and our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;” and then rose to heaven, to the right hand of God, from whence He shall come in glory to judge both quick and dead. The Lord Jesus, then, was both God and Man, uniting, not confounding, the two natures. He is Jehovah, our righteousness, and yet of the human seed of David.<sup>1</sup> “He is God over all,” “blessed forever,” and yet “of the fathers concerning the flesh.”<sup>2</sup> He is “the mighty God,” and

<sup>1</sup> Zech. viii. 7; Jer. xxiii. 5; Rom. i. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. ix. 5.



yet "a child born to us, a Son given."<sup>1</sup> He is "God manifest in the flesh,"<sup>2</sup> and this Word, which became flesh, dwelt among men, and they saw His glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.<sup>3</sup> But while for us men, and for our salvation, He came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, He became, not *a* man, but MAN ; he took upon Him not the narrow, provincial, limited nature of an individual, but our universal humanity, bounded by neither age, nor country, nor race, nor idiosyncrasy of temperament, but comprehending the common nature of all mankind. Abraham was the representative of the faithful of all ages and classes and climes, a host as great and various as the stars of heaven ; and the Lord Jesus, in His incarnation, took not upon Him the nature of angels but the seed of Abraham : "Wherefore *in all things* it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high-priest."<sup>4</sup> In Him there is "neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, neither male nor female,"<sup>5</sup> "neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, Barbarian or Scythian ;"<sup>6</sup> "but Christ is all and in all."<sup>7</sup> He was the representative of no one time, but of all times ; of no one school of thought, but of all schools ; of no one phase of character, whether that be masculine or feminine in its type, but of all phases ;<sup>8</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> Is. ix. 6.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 16.

<sup>3</sup> John i. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. ii. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. iii. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Col. iii. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Col. iii. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Robertson, in commenting on the last cited texts, says: "A humanity in which there is nothing distinctive, limited, or peculiar, but universal, — your nature and mine, the humanity in which we are all brothers, bond or free. . . . His nature had in it the nature of all nations ; but also His heart had in it the blended qualities of both sexes. Our human

no one line of religious obedience, but of all lines ; of no one condition of society or nationality, but of all conditions. Hence it was that in the Apostolic Church characters so varied as Peter and Thomas and John, — as Mary and Martha, on the one side, and the Magdalene on the other ; as the Roman officer, and the Jewish fisherman, and the Greek scholar, found in Him the one God-man ; the very God of very God, and yet the Man by whom humanity was to be redeemed ; the Intercessor for themselves, the one who, though God, took a nature common to themselves ; their own Redeemer-kinsman ; the bearer of their particular burdens, the atoner of their own particular sins, the soother of their own particular grief. Hence it is that believers of all temperaments, degrees of culture, social rank, and national characteristics, find in Him their Lord and their God.<sup>1</sup>

ity is a whole made up of two opposite poles of character, — the manly and the feminine. In the character of Christ neither was found exclusively, but both in perfect balance. He was the Son of Man — the human being — perfect man. There was in Him the woman-heart as well as the manly brain ; all that was most manly, and all that was most womanly. . . . So long as the male was looked upon as the only type of God, and the masculine virtues as the only glory of His character, so long was the truth unrevealed. And so long as Christ was only felt as the Divine Man, and not the Divine Humanity, so long the world had only a one-sided truth. One half of our nature, the sterner portion of it, only was felt to be of God and in God. The other half, the tenderer and purer qualities of our soul, were felt as earthly." — Robertson's *Sermons*, 2d Series, p. 269.

The whole of the very able sermon from which the above is taken, bears, though from another stand-point, on the present question. See, also, on the full comprehensiveness and universality of Christ's manhood, Bushnell, *Nature and the Supernatural*, chap. ix. ; Bayne's *Testimony of Christ*, p. 126 ; *Ecce Homo*, chap. xiv. ; and Uhlman, *Die Sündlosigkeit Jesu*, *Sechste Auflage*, § 228-270, — a book which, of all others on this point, is the most satisfactory.

<sup>1</sup> See more fully on this point Appendix B.

2d. Let us next notice the abuses of this doctrine to which our fallen nature tends. To these abuses the creeds serve as guides ; creeds and articles being, as we have already seen, not so much formal and systematic expositions of all truth, as defenses erected to shut out from the Visible Church those who at any time deny either of the vital doctrines of the faith.<sup>1</sup> And in this view, observe how vividly the creeds point out to us what was the first danger to which this central truth of the Incarnation was exposed. St. John foreshadows this danger when he writes : “ Every spirit that confesseth not that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God* ; and this is that spirit of Antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.”<sup>2</sup>

It was not the denial of Christ's divinity, — that equally vital error, which will be considered in the next chapter, — but it was a denial of His blessed Humanity ; and to meet this, and this mainly, are the specifications of the Apostles' Creed turned. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, crucified, dead and buried. And what this creed thus points to us as the earliest heresy as to our Lord's nature, is that to repel which the efforts of the first Christian apologists were summoned.<sup>3</sup> And the tendency that was the base of this heresy, and with which we are now particularly concerned, was one which has pervaded all periods of the world, and this is, *the unwillingness of the natural heart to admit in the Godhead those qualities of sympathy, and of tenderness*

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John iv. 3.

<sup>3</sup> See Wilberforce *On the Incarnation*, p. 111, where the doctrine in this relation is very fairly stated.

*towards man, which are essential to a true belief in the incarnation of Christ.*

Observe this in the view of the Lord most prominently brought forward by the Church of Rome. Recall, for instance, that most impressive picture which, as the altar-piece of the Sistine Chapel, is spread before the spectator in the most conspicuous and august services of pontifical worship. Remember that, as there the Liturgy is mainly in an obsolete tongue, it is by the medium of picture and gesture that doctrine is taught ; and then see what is the view of our Lord's character that is here set forth. Beautiful, it is true, but with the beauty of an athlete ; with a countenance in which this beauty, by the most consummate artistic power, flames with implacable wrath ; with frame of marvelous muscular strength, as if it were a humanity made perfect, not to rescue but to crush ; with uplifted hand ready to strike ; the incarnation of awful justice unmingled with a single element of tenderness or compassion ; thus in that extraordinary picture is represented the Lord. Mercy, it is true, is there exhibited ; but it is in the person of the Virgin, herself the exquisite embodiment of gentle pity, yearningly seeking to appease her Son's wrath. In *Christ*, even in this His human person, is exclusively portrayed the idea of relentless justice ; of severe, inexorable might ; while in the Virgin alone are tenderness and mercy displayed. And see how this same distinction pervades the Romish ritual. The finest and most evangelical of all its hymns is the *Dies Iræ*, but how severe and frigid is the view of the Redeemer here set forth. There is a plaintive appeal to Christ's human history, it is true, but no cry of glorious faith in His finished work ; the whole key is that of al-

most despair at the suppliant's sinfulness, and the Judge's awful and terrible power.<sup>1</sup> And with such a

<sup>1</sup> The Protestant versions somewhat lessen the august severity of the original: —

"Dies iræ, dies illa!  
Solvat sæclum in favillâ,  
Teste David cum Sybilla.

"Quantus tremor est futurus,  
Quando Judex est venturus,  
Cuncta stricte discussurus.

"Judex ergo cum sedebit,  
Quidquid latet, apparebit:  
Nil inultum remanebit."

And then, though Christ's mercy when on earth is touchingly appealed to, yet, even after this most affecting of retrospects, the strain resumes and closes with the original notes of dread and gloom: —

"Lacrymosa dies illa!  
Qua resurget ex favillâ,  
Judicandus homo reus  
Huic ergo parce, Deus!"

But the heart cannot dissociate the idea of mercy from God; it must find an intercessor; and a natural sequence of this hard view of redemption is the investing of the creature with mediatorial power. "The more absolute deification, if it may be so said, of Christ; the forgetfulness of His humanity induced by His investment in a more remote and awful Godhead, created a want of some kindred and familiar object of adoration. The worship of the intermediate saints admitted that of the Virgin as its least dangerous, most affecting, most consolatory part." (Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol. I. p. 205.) So is the Latin origin of Virgin-worship stated; and the long subsequent development of this culture in nations of Teutonic type is thus traced to the same cause. "Perhaps as the Teutonic awe tended to throw back into more remote incomprehensibility the spiritual Godhead, and therefore the more distinct human image became more welcome to the soul, so perhaps the purer and loftier Teutonic respect for the female sex was more prone to the adoration of the Virgin mother. So completely was this worship the worship of Christendom, that every cathedral, almost every spacious church, had its Chapel of Our Lady. In the hymns to the Virgin, in every breviary, more especially in her own 'Hours,' (the great universal book of devotion,) not merely is the whole world put under contribution for poetic

view of Christ, — the tenderness and sympathy of His human nature so lost sight of in the splendor and majesty of His divinity, — we cannot wonder that man, craving pity, and feeling that some medium of pity must be vouchsafed, should seek for another mediator by Christ's side, and that by the *Dies Iræ* the *Stabat Mater* should take its place, and that the *Stabat Mater* should be the prelude to those multitudinous prayers to the Virgin for her intercession, with which the Romish breviaries abound. It was because the human nature of Christ was lost sight of in His divine, that a human mediator was set up in Mary. It was because men would not fathom the depths of divine pity; because they shrank from that wonderful revelation, that God's Divine Son actually took our humanity for us, and for us bore, and bears eternally, a perfect human nature, — perfect in its knowledge, perfect in its sympathies, perfect in its intercessory powers; that, in contemplating His divine person, they closed their eyes to the human, seeing only the One Divine Master and Judge, living in incommunicable splendor and majesty, — isolated, awful, and severe, with nothing in common with humanity, approachable only by deified or canonized men. He ceased to be the One Mediator between God and man, and human mediators were imagined to take His place. He ceased to be the One sole Intercessor at God's throne, and so, also, human intercessors were imagined in His place. He ceased to be the One eternal High-priest, and human

images, (but) a new vocabulary is invented to express yet inexpressible homage; pages follow pages of glowing similitudes, rising one above another. In the Psalter of the Virgin almost all the incommunicable attributes of the Godhead are assigned to her; she commands by her natural influences, if not by authority, her eternal Son." — Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol. VIII. pp. 206-208.



priests in His place offered the sacrifice and made atonement for sin. No longer the One sole Divine Sympathizer with human griefs and Remitter of human transgressions, in His place the confessional has poured into it the burden of the broken heart, and from the confessional the edict of forgiveness goes forth. And when we trace these heresies to the one fundamental error of bringing despite on the cross of Christ by denying that very nature which that cross bore, we can understand the awfulness of that Silence of Scripture, which, equally with Scripture's language, leads our love, our reverence, our faith, all to converge to the one Incarnate Son. We no longer wonder that all other objects are thus screened off from our view ; and that as the One Intercessor, the One Mediator between God and man, the sole High-priest, we see the Lord Jesus Christ. We are thus, as it were, left alone with Him as our sole Mediator and Priest. All other spiritual existences in this work of intercession and sacrifice, are shut out from us. And the Silence and the Screen unite in saying to us, — "*This* is My beloved Son : hear ye Him."

3d. Our sole Mediator and High-priest, then, is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, while the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father, was and continues to be God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, forever. Neither of these natures can be veiled without peril to the Christian faith ; each is brought out before us in fulness by Revelation's shadows as well as its light ; each has its own particular meaning and force and consolation to the devout heart. Of the practical relation to us of our Lord's Divine Nature, I shall speak in the following chapter : to the practical bearings of His human nature, I now turn.



— The Lord Jesus became man that for us He might obey the law, and suffer for us, offering a perfect and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for our sins; He who was sinless becoming sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God through Him. Hence it is no imperfect justification that the believer pleads as his title to heaven; it is no inner work of his own; it is the full, perfect, and sufficient merits and suffering of the God-man.

— The Lord Jesus became man that our fallen and ruined nature might be lifted from its curse, and in Him, the one representative man, restored. His very incarnation made this earth the most glorious of orbs, for it was here that He condescended bodily to dwell. And if so with the earth which was His abode, how much more so with the human nature that He accepted as His own! "*I was sick and in prison,*" — I bore even the infirmities of this nature; in some sense all this nature, wherever it exists, was accepted by Me. Who can scorn, then, a fellow-creature, when it is remembered that it was that fellow-creature's nature in which the Lord abode! It is a temple which may be desecrated, but it is a temple in which the Lord came to dwell. And how should each of us detest those sins by which this nature is debased. We are not only redeemed by His blood, but this nature we bear was lifted from ruin by His incarnation. Woe be to us if we by our sin drag it back to that ruin, to rescue us from which He paid such a price.

— The Lord Jesus became man that in our nature He might make intercession for us at God's right hand. He is a true Ambassador from our earthly courts, speaking our language, trained in our discipline, bearing with

Him our burden. It may be that intercession belongs not to divinity, as divinity ; and what is revealed to us is, that the Lord Jesus took our nature in order that He might be our just and merciful High-priest. Divinity, as such, would have had a perfect knowledge of our infirmities and sorrows and temptations ; but no one could know them *personally* who did not feel them ; no one share their burden but one who bore them as did the Lord Christ. "He was touched," says the Apostle, "with the feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin."<sup>1</sup> Ever with us, we can at all times and in all places, in every temptation, sorrow, and infirmity, receive His sympathy and aid. Would that our spiritual blindness could be removed, and that in all our trials and adversities we could be both strengthened and kept from sin by seeing Him, our all-powerful, all-sympathizing High-priest, by our side !

— And the Lord Jesus became man that we might partake of His Divine blessedness, as children and co-heirs of the glory that is His. He was made of a woman, and made under the law, not only that "He might redeem them that were under the law," but that "we might receive the adoption of sons ;"<sup>2</sup> and "come boldly to the throne of grace."<sup>3</sup> Christ has taken our very nature Himself to His throne ; Christ being heir of all things, His people, in Him, are "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."<sup>4</sup> We are His very members, incorporate in His mystical body ; we are inheritors of His kingdom of heaven. And, believing thus, what manner of men should we be ! How should we

<sup>1</sup> Heb. iv. 15. See *post*, Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. iv. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iv. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. viii. 17.

hate that sin by which our inheritance was once forfeited ; which now, if we become its slave, will drag us from this glorious future to the regions of the lost ! How should the King's children, how should those redeemed at such a precious price, shrink from that which would soil their glorious robes, and bring dishonor on their beloved Lord ! And how gravely should those who reject the offer of Christ consider what is the destiny they thus accept. Sin, in all its pollution and degradation and unhappiness, might have taught them this ; but if sin did not teach them their danger, they must see it in the incarnation of Christ. For them He lived and suffered as a Man. His condescension and His passion are the standard of the ruin He would avert. It is as if the grandeur of the Godhead was the measure of the wretchedness of sin ; the height of heaven, of the depth of hell. And the love of God manifest in the flesh, therefore, while it calls the believer to a higher sanctity and purer holiness, speaks with tremendous meaning to the sinner who rejects the proffered sonship of God.

Before Him, then, the Lord Jesus, Perfect God and Perfect Man, let us bow ; imploring from Him holiness if we have received this adoption ; imploring from Him sonship if we are still aliens to the kingdom of His grace. He is the One Saviour of our souls, and beside Him there is none else. And to Him, she who was in her humanity nearest to Him of all his people thus leads. She, His human mother ; she, the chosen handmaid of the Lord ; she, to be ever blessed among women ; if we seek her, she turns from us as if simply with the words, *THIS IS MY SON ; WHATSOEVER HE*

SAITH UNTO THEE, DO ; claiming for Him that humanity which makes Him our fellow in all that concerns our griefs and temptations, but obscuring herself before His Divinity as one who was only to be saved, like us, by His unmerited grace. The veil is lifted about her in all that concerns this her motherhood, — in all that through her brings out the true humanity of His nature ; the veil is dropped when this office is closed, and the *Magnificat* sung, and Christ, the Son of Man, is shown as such by her, His mother, to men. Then the shadows fall on either side, and before us, and alone, is the One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LORD'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE, AND ITS RELATIONS.

**I** CLOSE with a topic on which the silence of the evangelical historians strikes me as peculiarly touching and impressive. When we lose a dear friend, one of our first objects is sacredly to set apart for preservation memorials of his person, or portraits by which his appearance may be recalled. If his life be written, with what tenderness are his features described ; and how carefully is the date of his birth, and of the main incidents of his life, recorded. Precisely as our love to him grows, do we dwell on whatever will keep his memory in all its living loveliness before our mind. In the whole range of human biography, I do not know of a case in which, when a life has been written by friends and disciples under the influence of affection and reverence, such materials as these are not affectionately and sedulously invoked <sup>1</sup> — “This day the Master was born ; and so he looked and spoke.” The writer’s affection yearns over these things ; the interest of the reader calls for them as forming a chief part of the agencies by which the lost is to be recalled.

<sup>1</sup> As an illustration of this may be mentioned Dr. Sprague’s *Annals of the American Pulpit*. Here is a collection of several hundred biographies of religious teachers, mostly by their pupils and friends ; and in each of these, when thus contemporaneous, the personal appearance of the person commemorated, and the main dates of his life, are points on which the biographer most tenderly dwells.

And yet, instinctive as is the impulse to impart such information in those who seek to commemorate a beloved leader and friend, — universally as we find such information imparted in such cases, — we notice on this topic an almost entire silence in the history given us of our blessed Lord. The day of His birth is left undetermined. No epoch of his life, except that of His Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, is so designated that its precise anniversary may be commemorated.<sup>1</sup> We hear of no relics connected with His Divine Person being preserved. And of His personal appearance, not one word of description is given. The character of His features, the tone of His voice, His general bearing, — much as we might desire to know what these were, — before them we find an impenetrable veil interposed. Old Testament prophecies, indeed, speak of Him in this relation; but when we learn that there was no form or comeliness in Him, we know not whether this refers to the want of pomp and state by which His human advent was marked, or whether it was ever accepted by the evangelical historians as applying to Him as He bodily walked among men.<sup>2</sup> Unlike all other biographies ever written, these are silent on those very points on which affectionate memory would be most likely to dwell.

To what, then, is this silence to be traced? Certainly not, we will at once say, to any want of attachment on

<sup>1</sup> This seems to have been the line drawn by the early Church. Neander's *Church History*, Vol. XIII. p. 406. According to Chrysostom, Christmas only came into observance about 385. Augustine speaks of Good Friday, Easter, the Ascension, and Whitsunday, as being in his day universally observed; but of Christmas, as then only beginning to be specifically set apart. Aug. *Ep. ad Januar.*; *Ep. ad Gal.* lib. 214.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix C.

the part of the sacred biographers to their ascended Master and Lord. They encountered, in the publication of His gospel, contempt, persecution, and death. The love they felt for Him when living, so far from being abated by His death, was augmented to a devotion which formed the controlling principle of their lives. Others, when there was still an uncertain future, have been loyal to a martyred chief ; but the disciples maintained the same dauntless devotion not merely in the face of the bitterest obloquy, but when the Holy Ghost witnessed in their hearts that bonds and death awaited them wherever they might go. And this devotion contained those elements which must have led them to indulge in constant retrospect on that beloved life, — “Remember the words of the Lord Jesus ;” “The Lord Jesus, on the night in which He was betrayed,” — such was the authority to which they constantly appealed. Theirs was the personal love which was due to a beloved friend who had laid down for them His life. Theirs was the veneration due to a holy teacher, and the adoration to an ascended God. “The love of Christ constraineth us ;”<sup>1</sup> “We love Him because He first loved us ;”<sup>2</sup> “Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins, be glory and dominion forever ;”<sup>3</sup> these were not merely their instinctive cries, but displayed the motive power by which their whole action was inspired. In the whole range of history, there are no instances of devotion to a departed Master so heroic, so tender, so unfading, as that shown by the disciples to their ascended Lord.

Nor can this silence be attributed to any general want of circumstantiality in the sacred historians. On the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 14.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John v. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. i. 5.



contrary, this circumstantiality — vivid, discursive, and minute — distinguishes them to a degree almost unparalleled. Each of them, from his own stand-point, notices just those collateral points which would strike an observer of his particular temperament, and then incidentally touches on what he thus notices, with a naturalness which is one of the strongest proofs of the authenticity of the text. Take, for instance, the case of St. Mark. "The details point clearly to the impression produced on an eye-witness, and are not such as would suggest themselves to the imagination of a chronicler. At one time we find a minute touch which places the whole scene before us ; at another time, an accessory circumstance, such as often fixes itself on the mind, without appearing at first sight to possess any special interest ; now there is a phrase which preserves some trait of the Saviour's tenderness, or some expressive term of His language."<sup>1</sup> As to the scenery about our Lord ; as to the persons who met Him ; as to His own journeys and discourses, details are profusely scattered over almost every page : circumstantial reference is the rule ; severe narrative the exception. The avoidance of a topic so interesting as that before us, cannot be accounted for by a desire on the part of the historians to avoid descriptive detail.

Nor, once more, can we trace this silence to any scantiness of personal associations. Mary, who watched over His infancy, was in her turn watched over by St. John, with whom she dwelt ; yet how few are the incidents of that divine childhood which were preserved. St. Matthew could not but recall the Master's appearance, either when the Sermon on the Mount was spoken, when above

<sup>1</sup> Westcott's *Introduction*, p. 365.

flitted the fowls of the air, and about glistened the lilies of the field, — or, when he, Matthew, was called from the receipt of customs to the Apostleship, and gave a great feast to which the Master came. St. Peter, whether speaking or writing, could never have forgotten the Lord's face, as he turned and looked on him ; nor that solemn interview when the commission was given him, "Feed my sheep." St. John, whenever he wrote, could scarcely recall a scene in which that Divine presence did not reappear : Jesus by the Jordan's side ; Jesus at Lazarus's grave ; Jesus at the last supper ; Jesus at the cross ; Jesus uttering those final words, — "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" And indeed this presence was constantly before the beloved disciple whenever he spoke or wrote, — "We beheld his glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father," — such is part of the introduction to his gospel, — "full of grace and truth."<sup>1</sup> "That which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon, and our hands have handled ;" so his first epistle general begins. "I beheld one like unto the Son of Man ;"<sup>2</sup> such is the recollection by which he assures himself that the Lord of the Apocalypse was the Master whom he had seen and loved in the flesh. But here the historian's lips become mute. Much, indeed, must those to whom in his old age he spoke — those who had not themselves seen the Lord — have clung to him as the last link between the immediate disciples and the Church, which, though not seeing, was to love. Yet, however full may have been his communications, — whatever may have been the unrecorded teachings of the other disciples, — it was the divine will that on this,

<sup>1</sup> John i. 14.<sup>2</sup> Rev. xiv. 14.

the personal appearance of our blessed Lord, the sacred text should keep silence ; that of the days of His birth, and of the main epochs of His life, with the exception of His Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, there should be no record ; that no relics should be referred to or individuated as in any way connected with His sacred person, and that the memorials of His infancy should be meagre and slight. To the meaning of a silence so emphatic, — so antecedently improbable when we remember the tender love the inspired historians bore to Him whose life they wrote, so unparalleled in the range of contemporaneous biography, — let us now turn our thoughts.

In the last chapter, I referred to the silence of the New Testament as to the Virgin Mary, as one of those screens which are so placed by Divine Wisdom as to shut off our wandering minds from other and false objects of worship, and to confine them to the Lord Jesus, and to Him alone. “There is One Mediator between God and Man, the man Christ Jesus.”<sup>1</sup> “*This* is My beloved Son, hear ye Him ;” such was the command given to the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, when they sought to detain Moses and Elias, as objects of veneration jointly with Christ ; and “when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.”<sup>2</sup> So God veils from us whatever would withdraw us from the worship of His beloved Son, as the one God-man ; our sole Mediator, Intercessor, and Priest. I showed, when speaking of the veil thus interposed between us and the Virgin and God’s other glorified saints, how merciful was such a dispensation, in view of the tendency of the natural heart to exclude

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xvii. 8.

from its idea of the Godhead those qualities of sympathy and of tenderness toward man, the recognition of which is essential to a true belief in the incarnation of Christ ; and I noticed how this tendency had shown itself in the post-Apostolic Church, in the obscuring of the Lord's human nature, and in the seeking out, instead of Him, of mediators in the person of the Virgin and saints. And now, of another tendency we have to speak, *that tendency to materialize and localize God*, against which the silence we are now considering is expressly pointed by the sacred text. "It is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come ;"<sup>1</sup> so spoke our blessed Lord when sorrow filled His disciples' hearts that they could no longer detain Him in the body as a personal associate and friend. "Touch me not ;" so He said to Mary when she sought to hold Him as if in bodily connection with His Church.<sup>2</sup> Christ "died for all," so declared St. Paul, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves *but unto Him which died for them and rose again* ; wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh ; yea, *though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more*. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Christ Jesus, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation ; to wit, *that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*."<sup>3</sup> God the Omnipresent is in Him ; reconciling the whole world to Himself. He is to be worshiped, as was seen in the last chapter, as the sole Mediator ; but the very silence

<sup>1</sup> John xvi. 7.<sup>2</sup> John xx. 17.<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. v. 15-19.

of which we now speak, hiding from us all that would lead us to localize Him in relic, or image, or epoch, shows us that He is also to be worshiped as the one Omnipresent God. This thought I now purpose to expand.

First, then, observe how deeply seated is this tendency to localize and materialize the Divine. We see it exhibited in the idolatrous tendencies of Jew as well as of Gentile ; and we see it soon manifesting itself in the Christian Church, notwithstanding the prohibitions of the Decalogue ; notwithstanding our Lord's emphatic declaration that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth ;"<sup>1</sup> notwithstanding the doctrine set forth in His last discourse that the dispensation of grace was to be a dispensation of the Holy Spirit, from which the visible presence of the Redeemer was to be withdrawn ; and notwithstanding the constant warnings and injunctions of the Apostolic epistles.

Observe this as to *epochs and anniversaries*. "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years," writes St. Paul to the Galatians ; "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labor in vain."<sup>2</sup> And so widely has this tendency operated, that in the Church of Rome, exclusive of saints' days, there are now seventy-four distinct festivals prescribed, of which *seven* are in honor of the Lord and *seventeen* of the Virgin. There is a serious difficulty in the way of such a system, arising from its interference with the duty of labor ; the divine command,<sup>3</sup> and the social obligation, being in like manner abrogated. But the spiritual consequences are still

<sup>1</sup> John iv. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> "Six days shalt thou labor."

more perilous. Specific indulgences are attached to worship on those days, and while *they* are consecrated, other portions of the year are supposed to be withdrawn from any sacred influence or susceptibility. God is localized in these epochs, and dissociated from days not thus consecrated.

So, also, with *relics* and *images*. When, in the Old Testament Church, it was found that the Brazen Serpent, the most sacred visible type of our blessed Lord, was retained for veneration, it was destroyed by King Hezekiah, who, we are told, "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."<sup>1</sup> In the New Testament, no description of our Lord is given, and no relic, as connected with His Divine Person, is referred to as retained by the subsequent Church ; and yet, in face of this, — in face of the wall thus erected between us and all such objects of adoration, — in face of the solemn warnings against idolatry and declarations of the Divine Invisibility, relics and images came to be regarded as the representatives not merely of the Lord Himself, but of His saints, scriptural and unscriptural. The Spiritual thus represented was lost sight of in the Material in which it was supposed to be embodied. The Invisible was absorbed in the Visible ; and divine gifts were supposed to stream, not from the Invisible and Omnipresent God, but from picture or relic which was His symbol. Where the image or relic was, there was God, or His Son, or one of His canonized saints ; and image or relic was carried in procession to stay the plague, or extinguish the fire, or repel the foe.<sup>2</sup> The distinction between reverence and

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 1-4.

<sup>2</sup> See Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol. II. p. 299. Pope Gregory II. defends this in his letter to the Emperor Leo. "Where the body is, says our Lord, there will the eagles be gathered together. The body is Christ; the



worship was soon lost sight of; the vulgar adored relic and image; the philosophic, unable thus to localize that which could only exist as Omnipresent and Invisible, too often ceased to worship at all.

So, again, with regard to *shrines*. "The hour cometh," said the Lord, "when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."<sup>1</sup> "The Most High," cried St. Stephen, "dwelleth not in temples made with hands."<sup>2</sup> "I will, therefore," wrote St. Paul, "that men pray *everywhere*, lifting up holy hands."<sup>3</sup> But these teachings the corrupted Church reversed. Not merely was God to be sought in the visible temple, but there was a portion of that temple where He corporeally dwelt, and to which all worship was to be turned. From this, the earliest superstition, the idea seemed to grow up that the Divine Nature, no longer omnipresent, was divided into a series of radiating centres, of greater or less splendor, by contact with which alone the flame of individual devotion could be kindled, or the spark of grace received.

What were the consequences of this localization and materialization of God, the history of the Church has but too abundantly shown. God thus localized and limited, ceased to be, in the eyes of multitudes, an All-seeing, All-directing, All-avenging God. Religion

eagles, the religious men who flew from all quarters to behold Him. When they beheld Him, they made a picture of Him. Not of Him alone: they made pictures of James, the brother of the Lord; of Stephen, and of all the martyrs; and so, having done, they disseminated them throughout the world, to receive, not worship, but reverence." Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol. II. p. 313.

<sup>1</sup> John iv. 21-23.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 48.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 8.



became a sort of magic: "Resort to the consecrated relic or shrine, touch and adore, and all will be cleansed." Common life was desecrated by this concentration of all Divine influence in epoch, or relic, or temple.

"We travel far to find Him, seeking still,  
Often in weariness, to reach his shrine,  
Ready our choicest treasures to resign.  
*He*, in our daily homes, lays down the line, —  
  'Do here My will.'"

So even the most devout would cry, striving to reconcile this localization of God with the consciousness that if He be to them a God of guidance and of peace, He was to be present with them in their hearts and homes. To them it was a painful religion of works, in constant conflict with the benignity and freedom of gospel grace. But the undevout, unrestrained by any sense of religious accountability in their every-day life, took refuge, when alarmed, in shrine or relic, and there, the purgation being accomplished, returned to a fresh career of impiety and sin.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I know no more vivid illustration of this than the circumstances attending the death of the Dauphin, the son of Louis XIV., as related by Saint Simon, an annalist in perfect religious sympathy with the whole system, and therefore by no means disposed to narrate its workings except with accuracy and respect.

The Dauphin, who was notoriously profligate in his private life, as the annalist very circumstantially narrates, was passing one day through the streets, when he "met Our Lord on His way to a sick man;" this being the expression used by Saint Simon to denote the carrying of the consecrated elements to the sick. Upon this the Dauphin kneeled, as was customary, to adore the Host. Subsequently, however, he inquired what ailed the sick person to be thus visited, and on being informed it was the small-pox, he was struck down with terror, and was shortly afterwards attacked by the same disease, of which he had always lived in the most abject fear. He died, continuing, however, his profligate relations to the last. Here we have brought out in tragic prominence, the union between a profligacy which was the ruling habit of life, and a religion which was

But, when we speak of this localization of Christ, — this veiling up of His Divine Nature, and viewing Him solely in certain limited, human, material relations, in which He is supposed exclusively to reside, — is there not an analogous temptation to which, while avoiding any thing like materialistic idolatry, we are too much disposed to yield? Relics *we* do not retain; in shrine *we* may not believe the Infinite Saviour to corporeally reside; but is there not a tendency to contemplate Him in the modes and dealings of His Humanity alone, thus humanizing and limiting Him to a mere Example, and not viewing Him as the One Almighty God, pervading all the universe with His Spirit? “It is expedient for you that I go away;”<sup>1</sup> may not these words be addressed

a mere magic; the grossest immorality and the most slavish superstition being thus combined. According to the almost universal usage of the day, lives of pleasure were supposed to be made holy by the insertion of an occasional parenthesis of religious retreat to monastery or shrine. These may be called extreme cases, and cases of hypocrisy may be cited on the other side, where men, theoretically holding to a spiritual faith, have led immoral lives. But the distinction rests in the fact that immorality in the latter case is in the teeth of the principles avowed; in the former case, the principle is pleaded as an excuse. The man who feels at all times and at all places, “Thou, God, seest me; Thou art the Omnipresent Observer and Avenger of sin,” is under a restraint of which he is unconscious who conceives the Divine Presence to be secluded within shrine or emblem, there to be corporeally received, when necessary, by mechanical act.

<sup>1</sup> John xvi. 7. “It (the passage in the text) affirms, not merely that the Holy Spirit was to come, but that, unless Christ departed, He could not come; that the disappearance was the necessary condition of the Advent, that a Visible Christ and an ‘Invisible Spirit of Christ’ were in the present dispensation incompatible.” — Archer Butler, *Sermon XIX*. In this, and the two accompanying sermons by the same very able writer, will be found an elaborate disquisition on this whole topic.

St. Augustine, in his commentary on John xvi. 7, thus writes: —

“Could He not, *being here*, send Him? Who would say this? For it must not be imagined that He had left the place where that Spirit was,

not merely to those who would detain the Lord in His Bodily Presence on earth, but to those who would

and was in such manner come from the Father as not to abide with the Father. In short, how should He not have power, even being here, to send Him whom we know to have come upon Him at His baptism, and to have remained with Him; nay, indeed, from whom we know He was at no time separable? Then what meaneth it, *If I depart not, the Comforter will not come unto you; but ye cannot receive the Spirit, so long as ye persist in knowing Christ after the flesh?* Whence he who hath now received the Spirit saith, *Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him no more.* (2 Cor. v. 16.) For, even the flesh of Christ, that man knoweth not after the flesh, who spiritually knoweth the Word made flesh. — Only we must not imagine that the Father is in any man without the Son and the Holy Ghost, or the Father and Son without the Holy Ghost, or the Son without the Father and Holy Ghost, or the Holy Ghost without the Father and Son, or the Father and the Holy Ghost without the Son; but where any one of Them is, there is the Trinity, One God.” — Oxford ed. of *Fathers*, Vol. xxix. p. 886.

The same great thinker, in a sermon on the same passage, writes: “Now there would be no great merit or glorious blessedness of believing, if the Lord were always in His risen body visible to human eyes. The Holy Ghost, therefore, brought this great boon to them which should believe, *that Him whom with fleshly eyes they should not see, they should sigh after, with a mind sober from fleshly lusts, and inebriated with spiritual longings.* This blessedness the Holy Ghost the Paraclete hath brought, that, *the form of a servant, which the Lord took of the Virgin’s womb, being removed from the eyes of the flesh, the purged eye-sight of the mind should be directed to the very form of God, in which He continued to be equal with the Father, even when He deigned to appear in the flesh.* By His Godhead indeed He is ever with us; but unless He had departed bodily from us, we should always see His body carnally and never spiritually believe: by which faith justified and blessed, we should be meet with cleansed heart to behold that self-same Word. God with God, by whom all things were made, and which was made flesh to dwell in us.” — *Ibid.*

Meyer, with his usual precision, thus states the same truth: —

“Uebrigens streitet der Satz nicht mit der alttestamentlichen Geistes wirksamkeit, da an u. St. von dem Geiste, so fern er das Princip des *specifisch christlichen* Lebens ist, geredet wird. In *dieser* Bestimmtheit, mit der *christlich* charismatischen Fülle, war er noch nicht da. Grund: *weil Jesus noch nicht zur Glorie erhoben war.* Er musste erst durch seinen Tod zum Himmel zurück kehren, um den Geist vom Himmel ans zu

hold to Him simply as a holy Example and unerring Guide? And to such, this Silence of Scripture has a message almost as emphatic as that which it bears to those who would confine Him to material image or spot. For, we have not merely those repeated declarations of Scripture which speak of the Lord Jesus as "equal with God;" as "God manifest in the flesh;" as one with the Father; as being the fulness of the Godhead bodily; as God, above all, and in all; but we have Divinity so encircling and enclosing the Humanity of Christ, that to receive Him as Human we must receive Him as Divine. "Touch me not," — As mortal, I by mortals am not to be approached. There is nothing Human that you can clasp, unless you embrace and worship the Divine. To the Human, the human avenues have been closed. No portrait here; no relic, or prescribed channel up which human energies may climb; no visible foot-prints which the human foot may in its own strength pursue; there is vividness in spiritual portraiture, it is true; there is awful closeness in spiritual application, as if the Lord, no longer on the mount or in the boat, was breathing in our very soul; but there is nothing which Divinity does not now inclose and incorporate; nothing in that All-Holy Example which we can detach and make ours, while we still continue to walk as unrenewed men, apart from the

*senden.* Diese *Sendung* war die Bedingung des nachmaligen *ἔλκει* (adesse). 'Die Angsierung des Geistes war die Erweisung seiner eingetretenen Ueberweltlichkeit.' (Hoffm. *Schriftbeweis*, I. p. 169.) Bis dahin blieben die Gläubigen an die *persönliche* Erscheinung Jesu gewiesen: dieser aber war der Inhaber des Geistes, welcher jetzt noch auf ihn selbst beschränkt und erst nach seinem Hingange zur Mittheilung an die Gläubigen als Stettvertreter Jesu zur Fortführung seines Werks bestimmt war." — Meyer, *Evang. Johan.* 3. Auf. 242.

Spirit of God. And if we thus seek to reduce the Lord to a mere human example, venerable as we may make it, we hear those mournful words: "It is expedient for you that I go away." And Inspiration herself, with finger on her lip, turns us from the merely human, with the words, "He is not here; He is risen." He, the God-man, is to be sought at the throne of grace. Perfect Man He indeed is, but only to be found as Perfect Man when sought also as Perfect God.<sup>1</sup>

But to these views it may be objected that the princi-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 16. On this point, Hedinger (cited by Lange, *in loco*) writes: —

"Von Christo haben sie (Christen) nicht mehr *fleischliche Gedanken*, suchen oder gewarten nichts Fleischliches an ihm, erkennen ihn *durch den Geist* als den Sohn Gottes, ihren einigen Heiland und Seligmacher — *Inwendig* musst du ihn kennen, in ihm und durch ihn eine neue Kreatur sein: *die gilt, sonst nichts.*" The last words touch the core. This spiritual knowledge of Christ is not of the flesh; it can only come by the new creation of the Holy Ghost. (Gal. v. 6.)

The same essential truth, which underlies this whole doctrine, is thus admirably stated: "Die mit Christo allem absterben, haben keine menschliche oder fleischliche Bekanntschaft oder Anhänglichkeit mehr. — Die Kindheit muss dem Jünglings- und Mannesalter weichen: *wir müssen nicht bei der blossen Menschheit Christi stehen bleiben, sondern zu seiner Gottheit selber uns nahen lernen.* Denn dazu ist jene vom Sohne Gottes angenommen, uns schüchterne und abgewichene Kreaturen durch ihre Freundlichkeit wiederum mit Gott zu verbinden. — *Die neue Kreatur ist des Herrn Jesu Leben in uns, aus Gott geboren, ein heilig Leben.*" — Berlenb. Bibel, 2 Cor. v. 16, 17.

St. Chrysostom, in his homily on 2 Cor. v. 17, adds to this the following thought: "For in us, indeed, *after the flesh* is being in sins, and *not after the flesh* not being in sins! But in Christ, *after the flesh* is His being subject to the affections of nature, such as to thirst, to weariness, to sleep. And *not after the flesh* is being thenceforward freed even from these things, not the being without flesh. For with this also He cometh to judge the world, His being impassible and pure. Whereunto we shall also advance, when our body hath been fashioned like unto His glorious body." — Oxford ed. xxvii. p. 139.

ple on which they rest debars us from all commemoration of our blessed Lord except such as Scripture prescribes. As this objection is one of much doctrinal as well as practical interest, I will notice it somewhat in detail.

So far as concerns any commemorations which are founded on false assumptions of fact or doctrine, no doubt the objection holds good. No relics can be connected by history with the Lord ; and so far as concerns images of Himself or His saints, they should be carefully excluded from any position where, in violation of the scriptural command, they would be likely to be considered objects of worship. But with regard to commemorative days and commemorative places, the question stands on different grounds.

Take, first, *commemorative days* ; and observe that while the only periods which we can determine by Scripture are the Lord's Day and Easter, including the events of the preceding week and that of the Ascension which succeeds, the whole question of such services falls within the Church's proper jurisdiction. "Every particular or national church, hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church, ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying."<sup>1</sup> In no way could the question be stated more succinctly or satisfactorily. Wherever a rite or ceremony is not ordained by Scripture, the question is open for the action of "each particular or national church ;" but the test is, — *edification* : that which conduces to it may be established ; that which is not conducive to it should be left untouched. Here, then, the tendency of the whole question of frequent festivals

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxxiv.



comes up ; and for myself, I cannot doubt that in climates such as those in which the English tongue is spoken, with temperaments such as those of the Anglo-Saxon race, our ecclesiastical festivals should be limited, with but few exceptions, to the weekly rests of the Lord's Day. "Six days shalt thou labor ;" such is the divine command, a frequent dispensation of which has been found conducive neither to public morals nor individual piety. "Orare *et* laborare ;" such is the spirit of the scriptural injunctions, working prayer into labor, so that men may pray without ceasing, retaining, at the same time, the Divine appointment of the weekly day of rest. There is a danger, on the other view, of piety presiding over our *inaction*, and deserting our *action* ; heaped up in periods of stated worship, but leaving those far more extended periods, when we act upon others and upon the world, bleak and bare, unsubdued, uncorrected, unsanctified by the appeal to the presence of the Most High.

And yet, at the same time, it is perfectly consistent with this view that there should be established certain grand anniversaries in which the signal epochs of our Lord's ministry should be commemorated.

" It was the winter wild  
When the Heaven-born Child,  
All meanly wrapped, in the rude manger lay."

So sang Milton, in this soaring from the very breadth and power of his genius, above the atmosphere of the Puritan reaction ; and though the period has been arbitrarily fixed ; although the wintry associations with which, for so many centuries, it has been connected, must be detached from it when it is observed in southern hemispheres ; although the date was left an

open one by those who with inspired pen recorded the Lord's life ;<sup>1</sup> yet is this sweetest and tenderest of all our festivals one which it would be well for our nation's home life, as well as our nation's religious life, to sacredly observe. So, also, to the fast of Lent. Who cannot but feel that as there are specific periods of the day which we set apart for peculiar communion, so there should be specific periods of the year when the divine injunction of fasting and prayer should be especially observed ; not, indeed, so as to suspend weekly labor, but in sanctifying and solemnizing that labor by leading the mind to dwell in peculiar closeness on the sufferings and death of our blessed Lord, and the sins which nailed Him to the tree. The mind must have such periods ; it cannot blend all states in one, — joy, penitence, self-examination ; it cannot blend all commemorations in one, without losing its distinctness of conception of each. And so it is with the Ecclesiastical Year, as a means of religious instruction on the Lord's Day. We must remember, as has been already seen, that the Scriptures do not present to us a scientific scheme of theology, but a series of detached facts and doctrines from which the individual creed is to be drawn ; and among these, by far the most vital are the facts connected with the Incarnation of the Lord. He was born ; He was subject to the law's ordinances for us ; He was tempted ; He was betrayed ; He was crucified for us, dead and buried ; He rose again, and ascended into heaven. Each fact has its significance ; each its full teaching ; it is by study of them, by pondering over them, by contact with them, that the full truth of redemption is breathed into our hearts. Our eye is too limited to

<sup>1</sup> See Alford's Greek Testament, Luke iii. 1, *note*.

survey this vast field at once ; the field is too divine ; blurred and feeble and vague are our impressions if we attempt it. And what method of study is so devout and effective as this of having these great truths set before us in succession, corresponding with the progress of His own blessed life, and culminating with the descent of the Holy Ghost ! What method of instruction so simple to the young mind, so consolatory to the old ! And yet great caution is to be exercised, lest the commemoration should be viewed as bringing down and localizing the Lord in particular epochs.<sup>1</sup> Christ revisits us not on these particular days, for He is always with us ; but that we may best know and worship Him, *we* set apart in order periods when we will dwell on the successive epochs of His life on earth. We cover up none ; if we do so, — if either be lightly considered, — the fulness of His divine work may be lost to us. We fear always to blend them, lest the acute and vivid realities of the Godhead manifest in the flesh be dimmed. But while, in a large portion of the year the moral and spiritual teachings of the incarnation are presented to us in their various general relations, from Advent to Whitsunday do we follow Him from His miraculous incarnation to the consummation of His ministry in the descent of the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Croswell's lines touch this point very beautifully : —

“ Oh let the streams of solemn thought,  
Which in His temples rise,  
*From deeper sources spring, than aught  
Born of the changing skies.*

“ Then though the summer's pride departs,  
And winter's withering chill  
Rests on the cheerless words, our hearts  
Shall be unchanging still.”

Holy Ghost. God grant that thus walking with our eyes turned heavenward, recalling His blessed ministry for our redemption, it may be ours on the last day to see the King in His beauty face to face.

And so with regard to the edifices in which our worship ascends. Once a patriarch lifted up his voice and cried : " Surely, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place ! This is none other but the House of God, and this is the gate of heaven." <sup>1</sup> But when Jacob thus spoke, he stood in the open field, where the sole temple was the heap of stones which he had collected for his pillow, but where angels ascending and descending spoke of the close presence of God. " Surely God is in this place, and I knew it not ; " such must be our waking thoughts whenever we arouse ourselves from the dreams of the flesh. For the heavens are His throne, and the earth His footstool ; and wherever we are, sinning or praying, obeying or rebelling, there is He. And yet, obligatory as is the divine injunction to assemble ourselves together for His worship, it is meet that particular and adequate sanctuaries should be erected and consecrated for this purpose, and for the especial service of the Lord. In such sanctuaries it should be far from us to dare to symbolize a habitation for Him who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but who has consecrated the devout and contrite heart for His particular seat. It is a dishonor to the infinite and awful Deity, by structure or by gesture, to treat Him as localized in altar or shrine ; it lowers the eye of faith and sensualizes worship to hold Him forth, not as spiritually communing in His omnipotence with the devout,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.

but as removed from them, with a dreary and godless blank between, only to be approached on epoch or at site. But, while this is the case, the house where His people assemble to worship Him should be made worthy of the most glorious office of which our race, in its social relations, is capable. There is no propitiation in this; there is no sacrifice in this; there is no visible altar to be erected as His especial abiding place;<sup>1</sup> but there is much to be done in commemoration of His love, as a token of His priceless and complete sacrifice on the cross for us. "Against the day of my burying hath she done this."<sup>2</sup> "Verily, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this be told for a memorial of her."<sup>3</sup> So said Jesus of the woman who poured the costly ointment on His feet. So of her who anointed Him with ointment brought in an alabaster box, he spoke: "Simon, seest

<sup>1</sup> See Heb. x. 1-13. Celsus made it one of his principal charges against Christianity that it could not come from God, *as it established neither altar nor image*. Origen (c. Cels. viii. 17) states the objection thus: "After this, Celsus says that *we abstain from setting up altars, images, temples*." And the truth of this Origen does not dispute. In the Oxford edition of *Tertullian*, p. 109, we find this passage from Origen cited, with the following addition: "Cæcilius ap. Minuc. F. p. 91. 'Why have they no altars, no temples, no known images?' — Arnobius I. vi. 'Ye are wont to charge us, as with the greatest impiety, that we *neither erect sacred buildings for the offices of worship, or set up the images or likeness of any of the gods, or make altars*,' " &c. — Lact. de Mortib. Persec. 12. And this the Christian apologists admitted.

Now these extracts prove two very important points: —

1. That which ran counter to the then universal idea of a divine revelation could not have been the conception of either impostor or enthusiast; and that, therefore, which we cannot trace to man, we must attribute to God.

2. The notion of the localization of Divinity in altar, or temple, or image, was a conception of the later Church.

<sup>2</sup> John xii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvi. 13.

thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, HER SINS, WHICH ARE MANY, ARE FORGIVEN; FOR SHE LOVED MUCH.”<sup>1</sup> Here, then, is the motive power and the consequence; the motive power being consciousness of sin producing love to Him by whom sin is expiated; the consequence being love showing itself in grateful and costly gifts to Him and His worship. There is no merit in this; God accepts not the gift for its value, unworthy of Him as is that heart by which such offering is grudged. We must not withhold from the poor, or from the Church’s missions, in order to add strength and beauty to the building in which we worship; but, if needs be, we must withhold from ourselves. We dare not provide massive foundation and stately wall,—we dare not invoke the architect’s genius and the laborers’ patient toils for the homes in which for a few years we and our children may reside,—and refuse them to the temple which we think worthy of the commemorative rites of our Saviour’s sacrifice, and in which generation after generation is to worship God. If economy in structure or decoration is to be applied, let it not be here; and yet, let it be always recollected that it is as a memorial of God’s love to us that the temple is built; that it neither draws God nearer to us, nor adds to the power of our worship; and that it is *because* He is an ever-present God, ours

<sup>1</sup> Luke vii. 37-50.



everywhere and ever, that we would offer to Him the most precious of what we have.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ruskin speaks admirably on this point: "If there be any difference between the Levitical and the Christian offering, it is that the latter may be just so much the wider in its range, as it is less typical in its meaning; *as it is thankful instead of sacrificial*. There can be no excuse attempted, because the Deity does not now visibly dwell in His temple; if He is invisible, it is only through our failing faith; nor any excuse because other calls are more immediate or more sacred; this ought to be done, and not the other left undone. It has been said — it ought always to be said, for it is true — that a better and more honorable offering is made to our Master in ministry to the poor, in extending the knowledge of His name, in the practice of the virtues by which that name is hallowed, than in material presents to His temple. Assuredly it is so; woe to all who think that any other kind or manner of offering may in any sense take the place of these! Do the people need place to pray, and calls to hear His Word? Then it is no time for smoothing pillars and carving pulpits; let us have enough first of walls and roofs. I insist, I plead for this; but let us examine ourselves, and see if this be indeed the reason of our backwardness in the lesser work. The question is not between God's house and His poor; it is not between God's house and His gospel. *It is between God's house and ours*. Have we no tessellated colors on our floors? — no frescoed fancies on our roofs? no niched statuary in our corridors? no gilded furniture in our chambers? no costly stone in our cabinets? Has even a tithe of these been offered? They are, or they ought to be, the signs that enough has been devoted to the great purposes of human stewardship, and that there remains to us what we can spend in luxury; but there is a greater and prouder luxury than this selfish one, — that of bringing a portion of such things as these into sacred service, and of presenting them for a memorial, that our pleasure as well as our toil has been hallowed by the remembrance of Him who gave both the strength and the reward. *And until this is done, I do not see how such possessions can be retained to happiness*. So, also, let us not ask of what use our offering is to the Church; it is, at least, better for us than if it had been retained for ourselves. It may be better for others also; there is, at any rate, a chance for this; though we must always *fearfully and widely shun the thought that the magnificence of the temple can materially add to the efficiency of the worship or to the power of the ministry*. Whatever we do, or whatever we offer, let it not *interfere with the simplicity of the one, or abate, as if replacing, the zeal of the other*. That is the abuse and fallacy of Romanism, by which the true spirit of Christian offering is directly contradicted." — *Seven Lamps of Architecture: Lamp of Sacrifice*. Pp. 14-16.

And then, finally, with regard to that view which limits the Lord, not indeed to shrine and epoch, but to certain merely human acts ; let us remember that it is only by the possession of the Spirit of Christ and in the recognition of Him as Perfect God as well as Perfect Man, that men can imitate His holy life. To conquer in our own strength the temptations by which we are assailed ; to extirpate in our own strength the sin by which we are polluted ; to rise in our own strength over the powers of Nature, of death, the grave, and hell ; this is not for us, in this our fallen state. But in Christ and by Christ our nature is redeemed, and, partakers with Him in His triumph, we ascend with Him to His throne.<sup>1</sup> Holy, indeed, was His life, and full of mercy and truth His deeds ; but we cannot localize Him in a *path*, though it is the path which He Himself trod, any more than we can localize Him in epoch or shrine. We clutch the human, and we fall, for it is vanished. But if in devout prayer we seek the GOD-MAN, then divine grace speaks : “ The Comforter is come, whom I send unto you ; He shall

<sup>1</sup> “ For such persons as have no other knowledge of Christ, no other faith in Him, than that which I have been just describing, *it is most expedient that Jesus should go away from them.* It is expedient for them that the man Jesus — the fair ideal which they have formed of perfect wisdom and virtue, which has shone as an example before them, and which they have fancied themselves able to follow — should pass away from their minds, — that they should feel its inadequateness to strengthen what is weak in them, and to supply what is wanting — in order that they may be led to seek Jesus and to find Him, *no longer as a mere teacher and example, but transfigured into their God and Saviour and Redeemer.* That is to say, we must lose Christ as a man, to regain Him as a God.” Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, p. 55.

See also Stier's *Evangelien-Predigten* (No. 33, *Am Sonntage Cantate*) — a collection of sermons which, though as yet untranslated, fully equals in merit the *Commentary on the Words of the Lord Jesus*.

testify of Me," — and then a new life bursts into the heart ; not the toilsome and grievous following Christ after the flesh, but the new creation of the Holy Ghost. With a feeling that all sin is freely pardoned by the oblation of our ever blessed Lord, — that His merits cover all our sins, and His strength will supply all our weakness, the pardoned sinner, through grace, rises step by step to the state of the sinless and glorified saint.<sup>1</sup>

So I conclude these thoughts on the Silence of Scripture as to the Lord's Personal Appearance and its Relations. In the last chapter, on the Silence as to the Virgin Mother, and as to whatsoever would withdraw our minds from His all-sufficient tenderness and compassion as the One Mediator and Intercessor for our Sins, I said that this silence was a screen so placed as if to bring before us, as divinely isolated from all mortal companionships, the human nature of Him, our ever blessed Lord. And now, silence stands on the other side of His all-adorable Being, and, in the great presence-chamber of Inspiration we worship Him alone. If, on the one side, all that would distract our conception of His human nature is veiled ; so, on the other side, is veiled all that would distract our conception of His divine nature. He is HUMAN, as performing obedience to the law for us ; as for us, becoming perfect through suffering ; as for us, restoring our ruined humanity by assuming its flesh ; as for us, in our nature, making intercession for us ; as for us, having a fellow-feeling for our infirmities, being tempted at all points as we are, yet without sin ; as in this nature raising His people to heavenly places as one with Himself. He is

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix D. See also notes on pp. 91, 92.

DIVINE, as coming Himself to be a willing offering, preëxistent to man, to expiate man's sins ; as, by the power and might of His divinity bearing a weight of expiation which no creature could sustain ; as the Divine Source from whom springs the Comforter to solace and direct us until He return in glory to reign ; as the Conqueror of sin, the world, and death ; as the Captain and Guide by whom His people are to be led over the vale of this mortal life, until they reach the divine royalties of heaven ; and as their glorious Welcomer to those eternal abodes. And these two natures are in one, not confounded, but united, so that He can be the One Mediator between God and man. Of Him as such all Scriptures speak ; and then these Silences encircle and shelter the inspired voice, conducting it — awful, single, and severe — to our mortal ears. So, then, is this Silence the Trumpet which brings to us, unmixed with human notes, the message : — “ Behold the Lamb of God ; Christ, manifest in the Flesh ; God's Divine Son, yet born of a Virgin ; dying for your sins ; ascending as your Saviour to the throne of the Most High.” We are shut out from all else ; and if we could imagine the heavens to be filled with God's angels and saints, — if we could imagine ordinance and altar and sacrament to join their testimony to that august host, — each would turn from us as we appealed to them, and looking only to Him, cry, “ Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts ! Heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory : Glory be to Thee, O God Most High.”

AND TO HIM, OUR EVER - ADORABLE LORD, WITH  
THE FATHER AND THE HOLY GHOST, BE ALL DOMIN-  
ION, POWER, AND GLORY, WORLD WITHOUT END.



## APPENDICES.



### APPENDIX A.

(p. 51.)

#### CREEDS, NOT FINALITIES.

**S**T. AUGUSTINE thus writes in his "Essay on Faith and the Creed":—

"However the Catholic Faith is known to the faithful, and committed to memory with as much brevity of speech as the matter allowed, in order that to those who have been born again in Christ, commencing and still suckling, *not yet strengthened by most diligent and spiritual handling of the divine Scriptures*, there might be put together in a few words for their belief what was afterwards, in many words, to be expounded to them as they should advance, and rise unto divine doctrine by the assured firmness of humility and charity. Wherefore *beneath these very few words put together in the Creed, the most part of heretics have endeavored to hide their poisons; whom the Divine mercy hath resisted and doth resist by means of spiritual men.*" — Oxford ed. xxii. p. 16.



## APPENDIX B.

(pp. 70, 77.)

## CHRIST, THE SOLE SINLESS SYMPATHIZER.

I hesitated to enlarge on this topic in the text, for fear of breaking its continuity. The following additional points, however, may not be without value in expanding the argument : —

First, on the human side, as showing our need of this sympathy, let us remember man's loneliness in the most solemn junctures of his life. Take, as the first of these, *conviction of sin* ; and see how this loneliness is necessitated by sin's profound subtlety and depth. Our superficial sins are known to all who observe us. They are like the countenance, which is inured to the open air, and bears without wincing human sight and touch. But there are secret and yet dominant sins, which lie imbedded in such sensitive recesses of our nature, that the heart shuts convulsively over them, whenever a searching eye draws nigh. And there are other sins, more fearful, which are stationed, as it were, at the portals of the heart, warding off scrutiny with flaming sword and flushed brow.

“ That man was never born whose secret soul,  
With all its motley treasures, of dark thoughts,  
Foul fantasies, vain musings, and wild dreams,  
Was ever open to another's scan.”

These sins, so subtle, so secret, so defiant in their fear of discovery, are hidden from *man's* sight, yet they form often the burden of our life, and if there be no help, its controlling power. We must sit alone with them, and

struggle alone, for our fellow-creatures cannot aid us in this dread encounter. Man knows not with whom we are fighting, or for what we fight. Hence it is, that in the great crisis of conviction of sin, the kindest hands that touch us seem cold and dead ; the tenderest eyes that look on us seem dreamy and alien ; the most endearing words, meaningless. Crowds may eddy about us, yet we are spiritually alone in this momentous issue, unless we be with Christ.

Loneliness, again, is an incident of *all great resolutions*. Duties only strike us with their full, healthy, pure force, when we rise above the bias and prejudices of society, just as the air only meets us in its full bracing energy when we are on the mountain summit. And peculiarly is this the case, when the resolution is to renounce *self*. It is not merely the *world* that we must then leave. Very often this self-renunciation may involve surrenders which even our *Christian* friends may resist. They know not our weakness ; our unfitness for temptation ; the necessity upon us to follow Christ closely, and take up His heaviest cross, or not to follow Him at all. They may desire from their very love of us to knit us more closely to our temporalities than we would do ourselves. In all cases of the first conversion in a family this is so ; for the young Christian must take his pilgrim's staff, and forsake the mansion of self and all who cling to that mansion, loved and revered though they be. Sometimes it is so in conversions even in Christian households, when the coals on the hearth have smouldered, and the old, heroic love to Christ become faint. "Wherefore wilt thou go forth?" they ask, and the young believer replies, "I must go, for the *Lord* stands without, and calls." So he goes forth, forlorn and broken-hearted,

but trusting in Christ, with whom he journeys. He goes not alone, but with One whose presence will amply compensate for the loss of all earthly ties. Nor does he go unfollowed ; for other steps on that same road are soon heard from that same home. Moved by his example, they follow in his path — the quickened pace of *old* love, the buoyant tread of *new*.

Then as we are alone in these first great crises of our life, so we must all of us be humanly alone in the *last*. For when we reach the end of this world's entry, and stand on the threshold of the next, the fleshly departs from us, and the spiritual is unveiled. Those about us, even the dearest of them, fade and flit away, and we are left in solitude to meet our God.

Then let us, in view of this need, view Christ as the sole sinless Sympathizer with the sinner ; and for this very reason, in view of His Divinity, the sole mediatorial stay on whom the sinner can rely. Observe, then, how this follows, from *Christ's holiness*. Among *men*, we cannot but observe that sympathy wanes as sin increases. Take the extreme case, and go to the haunts of the profligate and reckless, and ask how much sympathy we find in them ? The answer is given as we listen to the vulgar taunt, the cruel joke, the fierce oath, the wild cry of hate, the chuckle of delight when innocence falls, the hiss of treachery when another can be exposed, — sounds which we can never separate from the scenes where profligate crime holds sway.

But is it otherwise with respectable crime ? View this, for instance, in the phase of the love of wealth for the mere purpose of accumulation, and ask how it is *here* ? Do you find any mercy in capital whose object is simply its own *growth* ? From the petty tyrants of the clothing

shop to the merchant emperors who hold India under their corporate sway, do we not see that it is the tendency of wealth, when thus simply seeking accumulation, to crush out whatever of individual heart or happiness or right may stand in its way ?

“ Oh, men with mothers dear,” —

So wrote a great satirist, —

“ Oh, men with sisters and wives,  
This is not linen you’re wearing out,  
But human creatures’ lives.”

And so, also, to capital in its larger aspects, when engaged in this work of selfish accumulation. “ You are trampling out human souls,” — so it may be well addressed ; — “ you talk of subdividing *labor*, but you are really subdividing *men*, making them petty, and narrow, and mechanical ; you are drawing out of individual life all its freshness and faith ; you are making an atheistic world ; yet what do you *care* ? All you ask is that your dividends be good ; no inquiry do you make as to the misery this great machine of capital produces as it turns itself over and over on human hearts.” Sympathy with a fellow-creature has no place in those machines which capital erects for its own multiplication.

Then take another passion : the love of luxurious ease. It is not that in such a case there may not be a refined perception of scenic or sensuous beauty, for wealth and delicacy may be guided in their most noble labors by such a hand. Sympathy with imaginary sorrow may be active, for tears for fictitious grief may readily flow on a countenance which would sternly frown away the intrusion of real distress. But what we here see before us is a gradual withering up of true sympathy, under the

enervating influence of self-indulgence. There is first a withdrawal of this sympathy from the outer circles of vulgar or distant life ; then a proud indifference to all out of our immediate circle ; and then the extinction of all that does not touch individual interest, and then perfect selfishness is the result. "Close the curtains more tightly ; heap up the cushions ; shut the door, so that I cannot hear the voice of humanity imploring aid, or even of divinity commanding sacrifice." And so luxuriousness at last has no love left in it but self-love ; it has love neither to God or man.

Then observe, on the other hand, how sympathy grows with holiness ; and how this is peculiarly the case when there is a personal experience of temptation. A perfectly holy being, without this experience, could not but recoil in horror from human guilt as incomprehensibly odious and fearful. It would start shiveringly back, as the bird from the reptile ; and its object would be to fly as far as possible from the accursed thing. But it would be otherwise with one who had borne the burden of this sinful nature, and had felt at once its awful power and its insidious magic. The more saintly does one thus experienced become, the more profoundly does he feel the reality of this power, and the more tenderly does he mourn with those who sink under its yoke. There is nothing in them from which he can start back in horror, for there is nothing in them which he has not felt in himself. Growth in *sympathy* in him is inseparable from growth in *grace*. And do we not see this in practical life ? Is not censoriousness and a severe view of others' guilt a mark of spiritual declension ? Are not the most saintly and the most lowly at the same time the most merciful ? Was there ever a finer love of *souls* shown

except by such? Who but these have threaded the forest to speak mercy and comfort to those red men, whom *unsaintly* civilization only approaches to debauch or to destroy? Who but these have taught patiently under a tropical sun; or in the lassitude of Asiatic skies have preached love to those whom the world has only sought to pillage? Is it not in such also that we see the most sympathy with *physical* distress and grief; so that those thus growing in holiness, have also grown in tender watchfulness of the wretched, and in heroic guardianship of the desolate and the outcast?

If this be the case, the perfect sinlessness of our blessed Lord constitutes the feature which, taken in connection with His Humanity and His Divinity, points Him to us not only as our sole Mediator, but as the only true sympathizer with us in our temptations and griefs. He appears in this, His High-priestly office, as at once holy and undefiled, and yet as tempted at all points as ourselves. He is at once the sublime holiness of God, and the bearer of this mass of human guilt, in all its mysterious weight. He is at once the holy Creator of the world in its beauty, evolving it majestically out of formless space, and the sorrowful sacrifice of the world in its sins, staggering under it wearily up the road to the cross. He bore the full load, for He expiated its full guilt. He met it and vanquished it, and this without sin Himself. And we may indeed reverently think that the sense of the wretchedness of sin produced by His conquest of it in its full force, is far deeper than that felt by *us*, who so often yield at its first approach. *Our* perception is dulled by yielding; *His* was perfect and unsoiled to the last. We cannot measure temptation, for we give way at its first approach, as would the most



fragile of bridges when the freshet begins to swell. But He received its storm to the utmost, and He resisted its full torrent as it accumulated against Him its entire force ; and therefore He can tell what it is when we plead to Him for help in our trials and temptations whensoever they beset us. In Christ, then, we find perfect knowledge of sin and perfect holiness, and with these the perfect sympathy, which they alone can produce.

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## APPENDIX C.

### OUR LORD'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

(p. 81.)

The patristic traditions on this point are thus admirably stated in a note by the Oxford Translators of Tertullian, appended to their edition of that Father : — “ Tertullian seems to understand the words of Isaiah liii. 3 literally, as though the absence of every thing highly accounted of among men were part of His humiliation, (c. Marc. iii. 7, and adv. Jud. c. 14, ‘nec ad spectu quidem honestus ;’ c. Marc. iii. 17, at length ; de carne Christi, c. 9, very explicitly) ; T. however speaks of lowliness, of absence of any outward dignity or majesty to command respect, of what might readily be despised, not as M. Medina and others (ap. Moreau t. 1, *Hæreses Tert.* p. 54, *Christus indecorus*) say, that He was ‘non speciosus forma, sed fœdus et deformis.’ Thus in the de c. C. : ‘These, Matt. xiii. 54, were the words of persons despising His appearance. So that He had not a body even of human dignity (*honestatis*),

much less of heavenly brightness.' It is also true (as Moreau contends) that T. uses these terms, partly in reference to His sufferings and indignities at the hands of men ; as l. c. : ' Were even the prophets silent as to the absence of dignity (ignobili) in His aspect, His very sufferings, His very indignities, speak ; the sufferings of a human flesh, the indignities of one undignified ' (inhonestam), but not exclusively, since he argues that had He had the dignity of a heavenly countenance, they had not dared this ; and adv. Jud. he distinguishes the '*nec adspectu*,' &c. from the rest. T., on the other hand, explains Ps. xlv. 2 exclusively of ' spiritual beauty,' adv. Marc. iii. 17. The passages of S. Clem. Alex. Pæd. iii. 1, τὴν ὅψιν αἴσχρον, in reference to Is. liii. (coll. Strom. ii. 5), will, from the contrast, have the same meaning, of contrast with, and absence of, human beauty. So again, very plainly, Strom. vi. 17, (p. 293, ed. Sylb.) εὐτελής is opposed to a beautifulness which would fix the mind on itself : ' Not without purpose did the Lord will to employ a lowly form of body, lest any praising the comeliness and admiring the beauty, should be distracted from the things said.' And Strom. iii. 17, p. 202 : ' He Himself, the Head of the Church, passed the life in the flesh unattractive and without form (ἀηδὴς καὶ ἄμορφος), teaching us to look up to the invisible (ἀειδὲς) and incorporeal of the Divine Cause.' In like way when Celsus had said, that whereas it was ' impossible that whoso had something Divine above others, should not differ from others,' but that His form ' was, as they say, small and δυσειδὲς and abject ' (ἀγενὲς), Origen admits the δυσειδὲς, ' but not, as Celsus explains it, abject, nor is it clearly shown that it was small,' (c. Cels. vi. § 65.) S. Basil, again (in Ps. xlv.), says only nega-

tively, that it 'does not celebrate beauty of person, for we have seen Him and He hath no beauty,' &c. Is. liii. So S. Aug. in Ps. xliii. § 16: 'As man He had neither beauty nor comeliness; but He was beautiful in form in That, whereby He is "above the sons of men."' Ps. xlv.: 'Therefore manifesting that forma deformis of the flesh;' &c. and on Ps. cxviii., 'The Bridegroom Himself, lovely not in outward form but in excellency.'

"It appears, further, that these writers do not rest on any tradition, (for Celsus', 'they say,' implies, at most, only a current notion in his day,) but on an exposition of a prophecy; and, therefore, their words are not to be taken further than the prophecy bears, if interpreted of the outward form, 'absence of outward comeliness.'

"This same passage of Isaiah is by others interpreted of the 'marring of His countenance' through His sufferings; (whence the Jews thought that He was near 'fifty years old;') and this is evidently the meaning of Thaddæus in the document from the Syriac, ap. Eus. i. 13, 'of the power of His works and the mysteries which He spake in the world — of the lowness and meanness and humiliation of the Man, Who appeared visibly, and how He humbled Himself and died and minished His Divinity.' This T. himself joins with the other meaning, and S. Aug. gives it as *the* meaning, in Ps. xlv. § 3, and in Ps. cxxvii. § 8, 'That Bridegroom than Whom nothing is more beautiful, of Whom Esaias said a little before, "We saw Him, and He had no beauty nor comeliness." Is then our Bridegroom unlovely? (fœdus) — He seemed unlovely to those who persecuted Him, and unless they had deemed Him unlovely, they had not assaulted, had not scourged, had not crowned with thorns, had not dishonored Him with spittings; but be-

cause He seemed to them unlovely, they did those things unto Him, for they had not the eyes to which Christ would appear lovely — Those eyes are to be cleansed, that they may be able to see that light ;' which gives a sort of comment on T.'s stronger language *de carne Christi*, l. c. Theodoret explains Is. liii. 2, 3, of His sufferings (in Ps. xlv.).

"This passage of S. Aug. further shows that these Fathers did not think of what we should mean by 'meanness of countenance' and the like, but only a lowliness of the outward form, which (as is the case often now in such degrees of moral dignity as men may reach unto) had nothing attractive except for those who had a certain sympathy with it, and whose eyes were purified to see the hidden Majesty. Thus Origen, who admitted the *δυσεῖδēs* imputed by Celsus, says (Comm. in Matt. § 100, t. iii. p. 906, ed. de la Rue al. Tr. 35): 'A tradition has come down to us of Him, that there were not only two forms in Him, one according to which all saw Him, another, according to which He was transfigured before His disciples in the mount, when His countenance also shone as the sun, but that He appeared to each according as he was worthy. And being the Same, He appeared as though He were not the Same to all ;' (which O. likens to the Manna, Wisd. xvi. 20, 21.) 'And this tradition does not appear to me incredible, whether as relates to the body, on account of Jesus Himself, that He appeared in different ways to men, or on account of the very nature of the Word, which does not appear alike to all.' And S. Jerome (in Ps. xlv. Ep. 65, ad Princip. § 8) having explained Is. liii. 2 of His sufferings, and Ps. xlv. of the 'beauty of His excellences in a sacred and Adorable Body,' subjoins, 'for

had He not had in His countenance and eyes a sort of starry lustre, neither had the Apostles instantly followed Him, nor they who had come to seize Him fallen to the ground,' and this (on S. Matt. ix. 9) he explains not to belong to the human countenance, but the Divinity gleaming through. 'Certainly the very brightness and majesty of the hidden Divinity, which shone through in His human countenance, could at first sight draw beholders to Himself. For if the magnet and amber are said to have the power to join to themselves rings and straws, how much more could the Lord of all creatures draw to Himself whom He would !' "

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## APPENDIX D.

(p. 104.)

### CHRIST NOT TO BE LOCALIZED IN A PATH.

The futility of the attempt to follow Christ simply as a human leader, appears not merely from the reasons stated in the text, but from the want of an adequate motive power. Contrast, in this light, the morality which springs from the endeavor to obey certain precepts, or to pursue a particular path, with that which is inspired by love to Him Who is the divine sacrifice for sin, and which is the fruit of the holy Spirit of God indwelling in the heart. View this contrast in the following relations: —

(1.) Law, as an exterior rule, is, in its nature, a restraint on the natural will ; saying, "Thou shalt not

do that which thou dost wish, or thou shalt do that which thou wishest not." It is, therefore, a battle and a bondage. It marshals the will's wild power in perpetual warfare with an external yoke. But love is an inner energy, absorbing and uniting with itself the most secret purposes of the heart ; so that the whole nature, in sweet accord, cries, "I will." The first forces us into a path to pursue which is beyond our strength, and at each step of which we stumble and fall. The second leads us to Christ Himself ; and with His love planted by Him in the heart, to follow Him is a joy and delight.

(2.) Law is superficial, and deals with observances. It says, "Perform this or that ceremony, submit to this or that outer discipline." It tends to make religion, therefore, a superstition ; to turn it to the slavish performance of rites, and the idolizing of symbols ; and this with a heart unspiritual and rebellious. But love deals with the essence, and elevates the whole nature to the obedience and worship of God.

(3.) Law works but for the moment. Its labor is like that which placed for a day, along the desert over which the Russian empress travelled, transplanted and rootless trees, to be removed when the procession passed by ; so that the next morning the landscape was as sterile and unadorned as before. Law puts up for the moment's use, upon the sterile soil of an unchanged heart, the rootless foliage of virtue ; but soon, when the occasion passes, this foliage is removed, or dies out. But love, though working more slowly, sows a divine growth, which draws its support from the heart itself, and which continues while eternity lasts. Law cannot fit for heaven, for it only sticks the semblance



of heaven's principles on the outside ; but love does fit for heaven, for it plants those principles within. Law may cage up the offender, but it cannot change his nature. It may bring him to the scaffold, but it cannot reform his life. As it can only supply the outer appearance, so it can only repress the outer act : it has neither fetter nor axe to affect the immortal soul. But love frees not merely from sin as a tempter, but from the law as a bondage. It liberates, it ennobles, it assimilates the creature in his sympathies and desires with the all-holy God.

(4.) And then law leaves the offender in despair, under the burden of unreduceable and accumulating guilt. It says, " You broke the law, and for that these penalties are assigned ; " and so on through irremediable transgression and measureless condemnation. But love says, " All this was canceled by the cross. Christ fulfilled this law perfectly for you ; Christ suffered its penalties fully for you, that you may arise and obey it for yourself." To one oppressed by the law's weight there is no motive, for there is no hope of removing the sentence of condemnation to which each day's new transgression adds. But love gives hope and strength ; and in the atonement of the Saviour, and the sureness of His grace, supplies the stimulus and the power of a new and holy life. Law immures the eternal spirit in the grave of hopeless sin ; love graces it with a saint's pardon, and wings it with a seraph's strength, and speeds it to God's own home.

The whole question, then, is one of *man's* power as distinguished from *God's* power, of *our* feeble purpose as contrasted with *His* divine grace. A holy example cannot give us strength : the strength must be from above.

It is here, then, we see the full meaning of St. Paul's words in 2 Cor. v. 16, 17: "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "For," writes Archbishop Cranmer, "if we will be the heirs of God and of everlasting life, we must be born again, and sanctified, or made holy, as appertains to the children of the most Holy God. Now this new birth, or sanctification, the Holy Ghost works in us; and therefore he is called the Holy Ghost, because every thing that is sanctified or hallowed, is sanctified or made holy by Him. Wherefore, when the Holy Ghost is not in man, then it is not possible that he should be holy, although he did all the good works under the sun. And for this cause St. Paul, writing to the Romans, calls the Holy Ghost the Spirit of sanctification, that is to say, the Spirit that maketh holiness. Learn, therefore, good children, that all we must be made holy and new men by the virtue of the Holy Ghost, and that we cannot attain this holiness by our own strength or works. . . Now the Holy Ghost works by His word in this manner. First, he that believes the gospel, and receives the doctrine of Christ, is made the son of God, as St. John witnesses in his gospel, saying, As many as receive Him, He hath given them power to be made the children of God. For when we believe in Christ, and are baptized, then we are born again, and are made the children of God. And when we are His children, then He gives the Holy Ghost into our hearts, as St. Paul testifies, writing thus: Forasmuch as you are now the children of God, therefore God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, which crieth, Abba, Father. And when we have received the Holy Ghost, He kindles in our hearts true love toward God, as

St. Paul writes in the Epistle to the Romans, in the fifth chapter. The love of God, saith he, is poured abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. And where the true love of God reigneth, there are God's commandments kept, and there beginneth a certain obedience to His will and pleasure. . . . Furthermore, the Holy Ghost doth stay the flesh and the lusts of the same, and helps us to overcome them, that we be not carried away by them, but may continue in cleanness and holiness of life. These are the benefits and works of the Holy Ghost in us." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cranmer *On Catechism*, Sermon III.



Rev. J. B. [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]



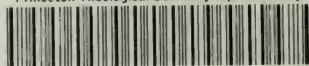






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